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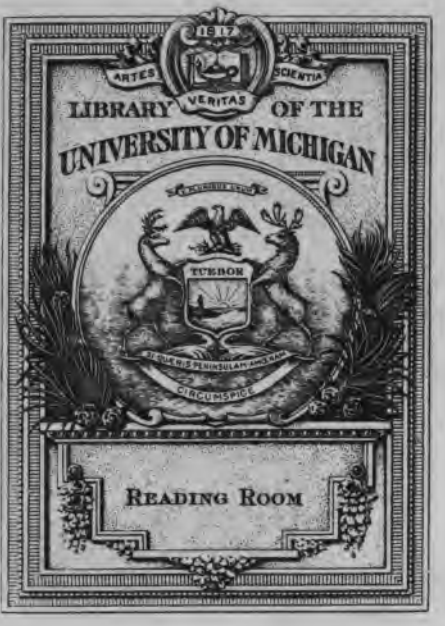
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THOMAS OTWAY.

From a Picture by Riley.

THE BEST PLAYS OF THE OLD DRAMATISTS

THOMAS OTWAY

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

THE HON. RODEN NOEL

"I lie and dream of your full Mermaid wine."—*Beaumont*

UNEXPURGATED EDITION

LONDON
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1893

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"What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
So nimble, and so full of subtle flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life."

Master Francis Beaumont to Ben Jonson.

"Souls of Poets dead and gone,
What Elysium have ye known,
Happy field or mossy cavern,
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?"

Keats.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THOMAS OTWAY	vii
DON CARLOS, Prince of Spain	1
THE ORPHAN	85
THE SOLDIER'S FORTUNE	173
VENICE PRESERVED	287
APPENDIX	387

12,0364

THOMAS OTWAY.

IT is now a commonplace of criticism that the epoch of Charles II. was an epoch of decline and degradation for the British drama. The complacent self-felicitations of Dryden in his early days on the superior refinement of his own age, and the consequent superiority of his own plays to those of Elizabeth and James, dispose us to insist upon the contrary view with somewhat emphatic asperity. Yet later, Dryden did ample justice to "the giant race before the flood"—the pre-rebellion poets, by himself so named—expressly repudiating French influence moreover. Indeed, the great wave of dramatic energy had culminated, and was subsiding. The age so extolled by Dryden was, in many respects, unfavourable to dramatic poetry. The Puritan, with his grave, earnest tone, righteous indignation against evil living, and crude, sour, uncultivated other-worldliness, had dehumanized

the people, frowning upon art, beauty, and secular knowledge; till they withered and dwindled, as under a blight; so that religious reverence became identified with blind intolerance, virtue and high principle with clownish ignorance and pharisaic cant.

Then, after the Restoration—(partly through that tendency to reaction from extremes which characterizes human nature, partly through the direction given to our stage by a dissolute and light king, who had lived an exile at a court where he and his courtiers, besides acquiring foreign tastes, might well learn disuse, and forget the habit of patriotism)—not only a wide-spread sexual license, but a very general social and political corruption prevailed in England. The troublous period of the civil wars, moreover, besides leaving little leisure for the graces of life and courtship of the Muses, had engendered a certain ferocity and violence of tone in political and social relations; the war thunders and commotions still growled and grumbled, heaved and seethed in the sullen subsiding swell of bitter and furious faction—religious fanaticism on the one hand, incredulity and moral indifference on the other. Our very patriotism was tainted with venality. And though some splendid naval victories adorned the reign, though a few names, for ever illustrious in our annals, shine like stars from among dark and turbulent clouds, it was a time when our buffoon king bartered the liberties

of his country for gold of a foreign prince, invoking alien aid against his own subjects; when the Dutch admiral sailed by silent and dismantled forts up our chief river and burned our ships; when Clarendon, the historian, the Tory statesman of high reputation, grovelling at the Council board before the divine right of Stuarts, proclaimed eagerly his longing to embrace dishonour, and sacrifice his own daughter at the shrine of that terrible idol; when the shrewd and subtle Liberal statesman, Shaftesbury, emulating Machiavelli, deserved the scathing invective inflicted by Dryden upon Achitophel. Shall we compare such a middle age of declining manhood, though not shorn indeed of all glory, with that of Elizabeth in the generous splendour and faulty exuberance of adventurous youth? The purple glow of health and morning had well-nigh faded from this dim world.

Still we must not exaggerate the loss. Power and passion were yet with us. The spell and memory of great traditions, historical and literary, were yet upon us. I do think that our most recent writers have been unjust to the Restoration drama. The brightest glories of that period indeed are unquestionably of Puritan growth, the fruit of Humanism and Renascence grafted upon the sturdy stock of pious Puritan principle, Milton's *Paradise*, and *Comus*, arrayed in magnificent language, sumptuous like cloth of gold; austère *Samson*, our only great native re-creation (no mere

clever imitation) of an old-world tragedy, because the work of a genius, devout as Æschylus, alive, moreover, with the personal experience of an illustrious personality; and Bunyan's wonderful vision, clad in a lovely homespun of purest English, solace of devout souls for all time, delight of young and old, wise and simple, rich and poor—healing aromatic balsam these from the still Puritan garden. Yet without this pale too, in the confused common world, in the sphere of rich and gracious secular poetry, there are two names at least that we cannot afford to forget—the names of Dryden and Otway. Two great human tragedies, *Don Sebastian*, and *All for Love*, besides one fine, though inferior tragi-comedy, *The Spanish Friar*, and the rhymed heroic plays, abounding in true poetry and skilful characterisation, has Dryden written; while Otway, who lived so miserably and died so young, produced three dramas of high calibre, one of which, *Venice Preserved*, is surpassed in the modern world only by Shakespeare. If those were the days of Lauderdale and Jefferies, they were capable also of nourishing the religious life of Leighton, Fox and Penn; the philosophy of Cudworth and Henry More, of Hobbes, Locke, Boyle and Newton; the narrative of Defoe; the satire of Butler; the history, and memoirs of Clarendon, Burnet, Fuller and Evelyn; finally, the excellent poetry of Andrew Marvell—leaving aside that thinner, weaker, more popular vein of Waller and Cowley; while even though Herrick

was gone, Rochester and Sedley could write a song. After all, the flood of national life still flowed strong, albeit turbid and troubled, still bursting through old worn barriers, irresistibly seeking, and with whatever delays securing health and freedom for all. Even the pulse of high Tories must have glowed when they remembered the European position of England under the Commonwealth; while Dryden was born a Puritan, though he died a Catholic, and had written an ode to Cromwell.

It is alleged, however, that the French drama had at this time (Scott says through the French taste of Charles II.) a baneful influence upon our own. But I cannot assent to this position. I believe rather that its influence was salutary, seeing that our drama never lost its own pronounced national character. On Dryden's earlier manner indeed, the fashionable French (or old Latin) declamation, casuistical debates about passion, and academic coldness may have been somewhat injurious. But this is a note rather of Dryden's idiosyncrasy than that of a school, like his neatly-turned, sense-isolating couplets—mannerisms shaken off by Dryden himself in his later plays.[1] Who can be

[1] In Mr. Saintsbury's admirable monograph on Dryden (*English Men of Letters*) we have, for the first time, the truth told about the origins of the so-called "heroic" drama in England—a semi-operatic creation of Sir W. Davenant under the Protectorate. But though the rhyme may have come from France, it seems to me that for the rant our Restoration playwrights need not have looked so far as the Scudéry romance, or the Spanish poetry; they had examples nearer home, which is equally true of the "conceits." Dryden is the father of modern prose, and the father of didactic

less French than Lee? Otway also is perfectly free from these faults; nor, except in his earliest play, *Alcibiades*, is there any of Dryden's rant and bombast. His fable, indeed, is classical in its simplicity and skilful development; his concentration on some one motive of action, involving the utmost intensity of feeling, is unsurpassed; his movement fierce and rapid; and that without sacrificing underplot, or the grotesque element characteristic of the romantic drama, as written by Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Nor can I grant that such concentration and unity of interest, derived from classical examples, was otherwise than a reform much needed in our romantic tragedy—seeing it entailed no languor or frigidity borrowed from Seneca, or the courtly decorum of a French academy. On the extravagant Gothic *fougue* and fury of our native stage, characterised by its bad artistic form, and tumid, fantastic diction, classical influence of the right kind was purely salutary—granting, of course, the presence of original genius, lacking, for instance, in Addison's *Cato*—although I fully admit with Schlegel that in the most perfect Shakespearean examples of romantic drama the virtues of ancient

verse, even, one may say, of modern satire also. Now, if a man achieve a reputation for eminence in one department, his eminence in another, however indisputable, is sure to be disputed. It has seemed evident to critics (and consequently to bookmakers) that since he was a critic he could not be a poet. Yet he was certainly both. He is more than what Matthew Arnold names him a "classic of our prose."

and modern poetry are combined. Mr. J. A. Symonds is unquestionably justified in his strictures on Marlowe's learned predecessors, Norton, Hughes, Sackville and Daniel as "pseudo-classical" in *Gorboduc*, and elsewhere. But then they followed the bad example of Seneca and his Italian imitators. Dryden and Otway returned to more legitimate classical methods.

Otway reminds us of the best Greek tragedies by the intense furnace-breath of his passion, and its headlong rush into the abyss of Fate, though his poetry may be more volcanic and perturbed. Modern romantic love is the Englishman's theme, while in the religious atmosphere, and stately ideal repose of Greek tragedy his work is entirely wanting. But is not irreligion a distinctive note of romantic Christian drama, even as religion is that of the Greek? True it is that Christianity has opened to us the Infinite, and made us dissatisfied with the visible world; true also that the ideal of individual character has been heightened and purified in the advance of civilisation under Christian auspices, and that this feeling after the Infinite, this dissatisfaction with life, this heightened ideal of manhood, together with a deeper and wider comprehension of humanity, may be found in the drama of Shakespeare. Yet what of *religion* is there in *Hamlet*, in *Lear*, in *Othello?* "The rest is silence"—that is the final word. What reconciliation, or attempt at vindication, of the ways of

God to man? Perhaps the most religious of old English plays is the *Faustus* of Marlowe, who is reported to have been an atheist! For we can hardly count the mediæval Miracles and Moralities. But in Racine and Calderon, on the other hand, you find again the religious atmosphere. However, Dekker, Heywood and Jonson are moralised in the best (and that no merely copy-book) sense, and Shakespeare sometimes, as in *Macbeth*. The Greeks took a familiar, majestic, semi-mythological history, in which Divine interference had ever been recognised, and the French tragedian took kindred themes. But in Otway's drama, while he adopted the classical unity of motive and harmony of artistic treatment, for moral order there is a dissonant clash, a confused shriek, a wail of pain. In Shakespeare, there are many noble axioms about living, many wise and religious meditations; but none here. Shakespeare is a broad beneficent river, life-giving, though lost in a boundless, bottomless deep; Otway is a turbid winter torrent, with the sob and moan of anguished, stifled human love in it, whirling us to a catastrophe without hope. Strange that *this* should be the outcome of Christian, and that of Pagan poetry! The truth is that the modern dramatic poets had largely shaken off their Christianity, just as Euripides had shaken off his Paganism.

At the same time, the best modern drama does make us feel the moral influence, for good or evil, of experience upon character, and the inevitable

issues in experience of character reacting upon circumstance. Otway (in his more limited sphere) does this, I think, as well as Shakespeare. Both leave us with a warmer affection for goodness. Carlos and the queen are noble and generous in their unmerited suffering, and Philip suffers for his fault.

Otway is classical in that he discovers a few principal groups of vividly portrayed figures, while the rest are very dim and subordinate. But he is romantic in that his personages are domestic, only dignified by their emotion. Dryden's flow is broader and statelier, but not so irresistibly compelling. In Otway and Lee, again, the lyrical fountain is very dry; sadly to seek is it in Otway, for in him there is no relief, no pause from the war and clamour of passion. He has abundant tenderness indeed, far more than Dryden; but then that tenderness is always shown stretched on the rack of disappointment or suffering. In such high-strung tragedy of classical form, we much need the chorus of Greek poetry, or the sweet lyrical ripple of Elizabethan song. Racine's exquisite instinct for noble style fills effectually the intervals between extreme crises. The comic scenes in Otway, therefore, though unfortunately gross and repulsive, are absolutely needed for relaxation of the tense strain. For he makes the impression of being almost all supreme crisis and desperate situation, like terrific peaks where the earth-cloud hangs

in gloom, only soothed by the low warble of water among mosses, or casual song of little bird, only broken by flashes of livid lightning—and all the rest barren steep; whereas in Shakespeare the awful snow-summits are girdled and invested with leafy forest, undulating lawn, lovely lake.

In Otway development of character, moreover, is little found; indeed, if "the unities" be observed as much as possible, that is not easy to compass; yet for knowledge of character in its labyrinthine recesses, and unexpected, though intelligible developments under the moulding pressure of circumstance, or commerce with other natures, as for nervous and appropriate poetic diction, Dryden's *Don Sebastian* is one of our most remarkable tragedies. The scene between Dorax and Sebastian is unsurpassed in Shakespeare. It presents a credible, though marvellous transformation of a proud, injured, embittered man to love and loyalty. Every word tells, every word is right. Here in one wonderful epitome we have conversion in the line of vital growth. It is no mere incredible and arbitrary dislocation of character, as of some puppet manipulated by a conjurer, which so often arouses our surprise in the pre-rebellion drama—for instance, in Massinger's *Duke of Milan*, and (dare I add?) in the *Richard III.* of Shakespeare. *All for Love*, again, is a splendid picture of the absorbing and enervating power of one great sensual passion;

while the interview between Ventidius and Antony rivals that between Dorax and Sebastian.

Lee is an inferior Otway, but a man of true dramatic genius, with flashes of real poetry. His *Rival Queens* is one of our excellent tragedies. Southerne has produced at least one genuinely affecting act in his well-constructed drama, *The Fatal Marriage*, akin to Otway, though distinctly inferior. Crowne too was a poet, as is evident from *Thyestes*, in spite of repulsiveness and rant. *Thyestes* seems to me finer than the *Œdipus* of Dryden and Lee, which indeed appears to have been written to show how much worse a play than that of Sophocles could be written on the same tremendous theme. But the *Fair Penitent* and *Mourning Bride*, tragedies by Rowe and Congreve, are surely merely creditable academic exercises, destitute of fire and inspiration. In a lighter vein, Otway could only write some bustling, occasionally funny, dirty, rollicking farces. To call them *comedies* would be to insult the shades of Shakespeare, Jonson, Fletcher, Congreve, and Sheridan.

On the whole, then, while there is less inexhaustible prodigality, and force of unfettered genius in the Restoration than in the Elizabethan drama, we have still left dramatic energy of high enduring quality, which became, however, nearly extinct in the reigns immediately succeeding. Under Charles, what was good in the romantic movement was still retained; the shifting, many-

coloured sheen of vigorous life is yet there, the sun-and-shadow chequer of grave and gay; but classic exemplars have moderated, and moulded the work to finer, more regular form. There is less of exceptional extravagance in the story, less of inconceivable and sudden metamorphosis or distortion in the characters, the unpleasant and bewildering effect in earlier plays being almost as when an acrobat proceeds to walk with long, lithe, serpentine body round his own head; less also of the over-elaborated, misplaced, unveracious ingenuity of so-called poetic diction. One may generously attribute all this to the extravagance of national and literary youth, but the drama of Spain and Italy ought possibly to bear some of the responsibility. At any rate, these are grave defects.

I will illustrate what I mean. It is surely with a shudder of incredulous aversion that we find an apparently kind and cordial king, in Fletcher's *Maid's Tragedy*, insisting upon a pure-hearted, generous, young courtier, Amintor, who adored him with superstitious reverence, breaking off his engagement to Aspatia, a noble maiden, and marrying the king's mistress, Evadne, in order the better to conceal, and carry on with more security his own guilty intrigue with her, and father his own bastards upon this loyal friend. Our incredulous aversion is, if possible, intensified when Amintor assents to his own dishonour, because it is the king who has compassed it. Not

all the poetry put into the mouth of "lost Aspatia," nor all the knowledge of human nature displayed by the poet in the seeming inconsistency of this evil woman's mongrel repentance at the bidding of her brother, and conversion from cruel looseness to equally cruel respectability, and base desire to vindicate her own damaged reputation even by the treacherous murder of her royal lover, can condone for this initial, radical vice of unnatural motive. No lovely tropes and phrases, nor harmonies of verbal measure may condone this. It is with equally incredulous aversion that we find Massinger's *Duke of Milan* bidding his creature Francisco kill the Duchess, who is devoted to him, and to whom he is devoted, should she happen to survive him—which, as Hazlitt says, seems a start of frenzy rather than a dictate of passion—then veering idiotically from love to murderous hatred upon the mere assertion of this same creature, Francisco, that his long proved and virtuous wife has solicited him, Francisco, dishonourably, he in fact having solicited her unsuccessfully. With some difficulty we accept the mercurial and hotheaded gullibility of Othello, played upon by so cunning a devil as Iago; but we revolt from so poor and pinchbeck a copy as this.

The early drama, in its poetic beauty of individual passages, and frequent verisimilitude in the working out of given motives, now and again reminds me of the character attributed to madmen, that they are persons who reason

logically, but on absurd or mistaken premises. And surely Hazlitt, not Lamb, is right about that celebrated scene in Ford's *Broken Heart*, where Calantha dances on, apparently indifferent, while messengers come successively to tell her of misfortune upon misfortune, death upon death; then, when the revel is over, dies suddenly from pent-up emotion. "This appears to me to be tragedy in masquerade, the true false gallop of sentiment; anything more artificial or mechanical I cannot conceive." That a woman should thus silence the voice of humanity, not from necessity, or for some great purpose, but out of regard to mere outward decorum of behaviour, for the mere effect and *éclat* of the thing, is not fortitude but affectation. It often seems as if the Elizabethan and Caroline poets wrote their plays for the sake of working up to some striking and effective situation, and as if it were of little consequence to them how difficult or impossible the way that led thither might be, so long as they could hew their path there. Even the splendid scenes in Cyril Tourneur's *Revenger's Tragedy*, where the brothers assume a disguise in order to tempt their sister to unchastity, and procure their mother's consent to it, then threaten to kill their mother for consenting, appear to be open to the same objection.[1]

[1] Shall we find such things in the modern creations of Scott, George Sand, Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë (possibly we may in Emily Brontë), Thomas Hardy, or Tolstoi?

But I wish to emphasize the fact that the drama of Otway, whatever its shortcomings, is, in this respect of sobriety and truth to nature, superior on the whole to that of his illustrious forerunners. And surely a good deal of cant is now uttered about the academic insipidity and coldness of Corneille and Racine, who influenced our later drama, and who powerfully moved the men of their own day. What can be nobler than *Athalie*, *Britannicus*, or *The Cid?* Academic coldness is hardly the phrase that rises to one's lips when one is watching Sarah Bernhardt in *Phèdre;* while no comedy is superior to Molière's. If these men moved in golden fetters, they were strong enough to wear them as ornaments, rather than sink under them as impediments. Under the kid glove you feel the iron thews.

None of this incredulous aversion of which I spoke do we feel in reading Otway's *Venice Preserved*. Dryden averred that he could not move the feelings as could Otway, who, while inferior in reflection, poetic expression, and versification, was a greater master of pathos and passion. On the latter acts of *Venice Preserved* we are hurried breathlessly, as by the impetus of a mighty wave, shaken to the very depths—yet not, I think, unendurably, as by the hideous and gratuitous cruelty of Ferdinand exercised upon a little-offending sister in Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, where horror upon horror is accumulated upon her head, to thrill and harrow us; and so

powerful is the poet that only those can experience the pleasure which art should extract from pain, who enjoy the sight of an execution, or sniff gladly in a torture-chamber the fumes of spilt blood. We begin to breathe freely only when the monster, having filled up the measure of his unnatural malice, utters the fine line that first shows a faint relenting toward humanity:

> Cover her face: mine eyes dazzle: she died young.

The Elizabethans were superior to their successors in isolated passages, and for the most part incomparably so in their lyrics. Therefore, they are well represented in the "Dramatic specimens" of Charles Lamb. Otway could not be so represented; his excellence lies in the noble organic harmony and sanity of his whole creation, as in its emotional intensity, from which little can be detached that shall be admirable out of its own vital relation. I do not say that Dryden and Otway never attempt to enlist interest illegitimately in their tragedies by relying upon strained situations, and abnormal traits of character; but I believe they do so less than their predecessors. And I hardly think Mr. Symonds' excuse for the Elizabethans a valid one, when he urges that the men and women of that time were really as inconsistent as the playwrights represent them. I do not know that we have any historical instance of just that queer kind of inconsistency which we find in their pages, though

I admit that not only history, but our own experience also, furnishes very strange examples of self-contradiction. Yet one can only say that the examples of it in the older drama are not, for the most part, rendered credible and probable to us. And, so far, therefore, this is not a drama which can be always and universally interesting, except in the supreme examples. In the same way Otway's and Wycherley's indecencies would hardly (one supposes) interest a Victorian audience. The intellectual, or ethical, atmosphere must not be too unfamiliar and alien.

We are not incredulous when Jaffier, the weak, affectionate, impulsive hero of *Venice Preserved*, maddened by the persecution of his adored bride, Belvidera, on the part of her implacable father, who is also a senator, suddenly, and without counting the cost, from motives of revenge and hope of better fortune, consents to take part in a conspiracy against the State, persuaded by his dearest friend, Pierre, a man of sterner and more homogeneous fibre. Nor are we incredulous when, realising with his tender heart what hideous consequences are likely to ensue in the disturbance of domestic peace, and the slaughter of so many innocent people, he allows himself, however reluctantly, to be over-persuaded by Belvidera, who comprehends that the murder of her father, with all the other senators, is intended; or when, thus over persuaded, he renounces his purpose, and betrays his fellow-conspirators,

including even his well-beloved friend, to the Doge and Senate. We are not incredulous when we see Jaffier, on his way to the Senate, walking as in a dream under spell of his adored Belvidera's more powerful will, and hear him say in some of the most beautiful lines the poet wrote:

> Come, lead me forward now, like a tame lamb,
> To sacrifice: thus in his fatal garlands
> Decked fine, and pleased the wanton skips and plays,
> Trots by the enticing flattering priestess' side,
> And much transported with his little pride,
> Forgets his dear companions of the plain;
> Till by her bound he's on the altar lain;
> Yet then he hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the pain.

The catastrophe we feel inevitably to follow from the given elements in their fusion and entanglement, the cruel injustice of the father, the weak and foolish impulsiveness of the hero, together with his ardent affection both to bride and friend, and the co-existent corruption in the State, which made that sinister intrigue against the Republic possible.

I cannot agree with Dr. Garnett that the interest of Otway's plays arises from the situation only, not from the characters. It appears to me that the humanity of the characters is strongly realised, and that we are made to sympathise with them profoundly. As to Addison's remark that the characters are mostly wicked, I hardly know what to say. The heroines are ideally good, and the others are neither better nor

worse than average men and women. If Shakespeare has given us types—though these are also individuals—of ambition, jealousy, revengeful avarice, unpractical genius, showing us the natural issues and eventuations of these, Otway has given us one type, equally individual, of weak, but absorbing, and passionate affection, showing us the natural issues of this. As Johnson says, he "consulted nature in his own breast."

Having then revealed the intended treason, after extorting an oath from the Senate to spare the lives of his coadjutors, Jaffier is confronted with Pierre and the rest. Then follows a tremendous scene, in which Jaffier almost abjectly implores Pierre for pardon, and the latter spurns him as one proved unworthy the friendship of an honest man, finally striking and hurling Jaffier from him. The words he uses to his former friend are worse even than the blow; their venom can never cease to rankle. The blunt, open and magnanimous, though reckless and desperate character of Pierre is finely contrasted with that of Jaffier, luxuriously feminine in its sensibility. Jaffier urges that he has at least saved Pierre's life, to which his old friend makes the terrible reply:

> I scorn it more because preserved by thee.

When Belvidera was delivered by Jaffier, in pledge of his own good faith, into the hands of the conspirators, he gave them a dagger, charging them to despatch her, should he prove traitor,

The Senate, false to their oath, condemned the rebels to death with torture; indeed the latter had refused to accept their lives with bondage at the hands of the Republic. Belvidera tells Jaffier this, and then he feels tempted to slay with that dagger her who has incited him to compass the ruin of his beloved friend. This is another tremendous scene. Prevented by the returning and overwhelming tide of love from executing his purpose, Jaffier bids her go to her father, and from him as senator beg the life of Pierre. She does so, and the old man, relenting at the sight of his yet beloved child kneeling in agony before him, grants her prayer. This part also is very beautiful. But his attempt to save Pierre comes too late. In their final most moving interview Jaffier tells Belvidera that he will not survive his friend. He commends his beloved to Heaven, calling down every blessing upon her. But when she understands that they are to part for ever she exclaims:

> Oh! call back
> Your cruel blessing; stay with me and curse me!
> * * * Leave thy dagger with me.
> Bequeath me something—Not one kiss at parting? * * *
> Another, sure another,
> For that poor little one you've taken care of;
> I'll give it him truly.

Then her mind gives way, and in the fearful soliloquy that follows, Otway reminds us of the power shown by Shakespeare in dealing with minds unhinged. Jaffier being allowed to take

leave of Pierre on the scaffold, Pierre forgives him, but requests, as a last favour, that his friend will save him from the dishonour of public torture by killing him at the last moment. Jaffier promises, and does so, stabbing himself immediately after. In the last scene, Belvidera enters distracted:

> Come, come, come, come, nay come to bed,
> Pr'ythee my love! The winds! Hark how they whistle,
> And the rain beats; oh! how the weather shrinks me!
> You're angry now; who cares? * * * [JAFFIER'S *ghost rises.*
> Are you returned? See, father, here he's come again!
> Am I to blame to love him? Oh, the dear one! [*Ghost sinks.*
> Why do you fly me? Are you angry still then?
> Father, where art thou? Father, why do you do thus?
> Stand off. Don't hide him from me. He's here somewhere.

The apparitions of Jaffier and Pierre rise again bleeding. When they sink, she vows passionately that she will dig for them till she find them; and, imagining that they are drawing her downward, she dies.

Though nearly all authorities have objected vehemently to the gross quasi-comic scenes with which Otway has lightened the intense gloom of his tragedy, I am not sure that the illustrious French critic, Taine, is not right in his approval of them. However ghastly, they give some relief. Though coarse and disgusting, they do stand out distinctly in the memory. The conspirators met at the house of one Aquilina, a Greek courtesan, who had private motives for favouring their cause. The old senator, Antonio (intended for a

caricature of the debauched Shaftesbury), had robbed Pierre of this mistress, which was one of his main incentives to plotting against the State. Taine's comment on the picture is striking: "Comme l'homme est prompt à s'avilir, quand, échappé de son rôle, il revient à lui-même!" He thinks that Otway alone in that epoch reproduced the tragedy of Shakespeare: "Il ne lui manque que de naître cent ans plus tôt." Perhaps; only his form might then have suffered.

And now as to Otway's diction. There is nothing convulsive about it; in him, to borrow a simile from Lowell, "every word does not seem to be underlined, like those of a school girl's letter." In the eyes of those to whom expression is good in proportion as it foregoes its function of expressing, in favour of a bedizenment, as of some window so prettily daubed that it lets in no light, the diction of Dryden, Otway, Goldsmith, Byron may appear poor. Otway speaks the language of nature and passion. Still, I admit that Otway's diction often does want distinction, and his metre rhythmical quality. He has not always the right word ready. But his language has certainly the merit of doing more justice to his subject than that of his euphuistic predecessors. Take, for instance, an example from that portion of the fine play, entitled *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, on good grounds attributed to Shakespeare. A queen, the body of whose slain lord remains unburied by

order of a cruel king, implores redress from one able to grant it in these terms:

> Oh, my petition was
> Set down in ice, which by hot grief uncandied
> Melts into drops * * * he that will fish
> For my least minnow, let him lead his line
> To catch one at my heart.

Another queen, making a similar request, assures Theseus that they are—

> Rinsing our holy begging in our eyes
> To make petition clear.

Can these ladies, whose sorrow must have been much mitigated by their successful invention of such "precious" hyperboles, stand in need of much commiseration from us? Otway's expression at its best is simple, germane to the situation, vigorous, pregnant with the speaker's emotion, and therefore well calculated to impregnate us with it.

In the swift impetuous parts of a play such a diction is certainly best. Only Heywood, so far as I know, among the older dramatists, is equally pure. But I admit that where the action pauses, where it demands reflective soliloquy, Otway and Lee are inferior to their great predecessors. In *Venice Preserved*, and *The Orphan*, the pace is so tremendous, however, that we have hardly leisure to perceive their poverty in that respect. But there are occasions, in *Don Carlos* especially, where we do feel this inferiority, although the play is one of Otway's finest. Thus, at the beginning of the

fifth act, when the king soliloquises on his misery in having lost the love of his bride, there was scope and verge for poetry of reflection, which Beaumont and Fletcher would have given, as well as Shakespeare. Dryden also would have given it, though perhaps of a somewhat coarser grain. This passage in Otway is poor, unworthy the occasion. His versification, moreover, though very good sometimes, is inferior on the whole to that of Dryden. Yet there are some passages of true reflective poetry in Otway, though certainly few and far between. In Southerne they are almost entirely wanting.

In *Don Carlos* we note the same want of political and historic sense which we had also to note in *Venice Preserved*, especially when we compare both plays with the narratives of Saint-Réal, from which they are taken, and which have high merit; or when we compare Otway's with Schiller's *Don Carlos*, and even with Alfieri's tragedy, *Filippo*, though the extraordinary concentration of the latter admits of little historic detail. Still Alfieri's Philip is as life-like and graphic a study of individuality as that of Saint-Réal, or Schiller; whereas the Philip of Otway makes no pretence to being other than a mere conventional stage-tyrant, violent, and ever in extremes; yet is he a man capable of much tenderness also; for he actually loves the Queen and his son, feelings of which the real Philip was incapable. Philip's jealousy in real life, as in the other two plays,

only arises from a fierce sensual greed of personal possession, and from wounded pride. In Otway the king repents, although too late, and becomes reconciled to his wife and son, when he discovers that his jealousy has made him a blind tool in the hands of the enemies of Carlos and the Queen, and that they have not sinned in act. But the real Philip could not have repented. He did not believe them guilty in act. Otway's range is limited, his types are few. He could not draw a cold deliberate villain. As for his politics, they are simply those of an ordinary country clergyman's son. But he died very young, with little experience. The Philip of Schiller and Alfieri is a cold, cruel, ambitious bigot, only capable of simulating natural affection. But in each of the three tragedies the Queen and Don Carlos are powerfully presented. The German play has all the Elizabethan lack of unity. Schiller's own intense and catholic sympathy with human progress and popular aspirations dominates throughout; and while unity of motive—for instance, in the important place given to Posa, friend of Carlos, a magnificent humane ideal—is somewhat lacking, there is more human verisimilitude in his play than in that of Otway, because men and women are usually swayed by complex and manifold impulses. The political part taken by the Queen and Prince in favour of the Flemish rebels had indeed a great deal to do with the King's anger against them. The splendid interview

of Posa with the tyrant, and also the Grand Inquisitor's are quite beyond Otway. Philip had wickedly married Elisabeth, who was originally betrothed to his son Carlos, and the conflict of conjugal duty with love is admirably rendered in all the tragedies, although the passion and pathos are perhaps warmest in Otway. This is the sole motive in the English and Italian plays. In Schiller there is a whole era, "the very form and pressure" of a time.

We get as little philosophy or theology, as political and historic sympathy from Otway. In this respect he is inferior not only to Shakespeare, but to Dryden, who is able to afford more food for the intellect, if less for the heart. The terse and nervous expression of ripe and mellow life-wisdom in Dryden's *Spanish Friar*, for instance, is very remarkable. The greater poets indeed are usually men of great general intellectual power. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Spenser, Goethe, Dante, Milton, Byron, Coleridge, Browning, occur at once to memory. Otway is perhaps exceptional in this respect. Possibly the free-thinking sentiments so fiercely hurled in the teeth of the priest by Pierre on the scaffold afford a clue to Otway's own attitude toward religion. In *The Orphan* we find the same ardour of friendship and attachment between the sexes, the same raging despair and revolted denial, when those fierce

affections are disappointed—no faith. Castalio's last words are—

> Patience! preach it to the winds,
> To roaring seas, or raging fires; the knaves
> That teach it laugh at ye when ye believe them. * * *
> Now all I beg is, lay me in one grave,
> Thus with my love! Farewell, I now am—nothing.

And Chamfort's, the last in the play:

> 'Tis thus that Heaven its empire does maintain;
> It may afflict, but man must not complain.

The scenes in *Don Carlos*, where Carlos and the Queen meet, are admirably right in their abrupt, interrupted utterance, and must have been most effective on the stage. On the whole, no better opportunity exists for comparing the classical and romantic manners than in the examples afforded by these three plays on the reign of Philip. Don John's soliloquy about bastardy and free love is exceptionally good as a purple patch of poetry in Otway, though not without a reminiscence of Shakespeare's Edmund. There are likewise two splendid lines uttered by the King when Gomez is tempting him to suspect his son and queen. Gomez says:

> 'Tis true they gazed, but 'twas not very long.
> *King.* Lie still, my heart. Not long was't that you said?
> *Gomez.* No longer than they in your presence stayed.
> *King. No longer? Why a soul in less time flies*
> *To Heaven, and they have changed theirs at their eyes.*

The Orphan I do not myself like so much as *Don Carlos*, but it is full of Otway's peculiar power, and has a greater reputation. The plot is repulsive, with a flavour of Elizabethan

unsoundness. All the mischief and misery arise from a want of moral courage shown by Castalio, the passionate, but weak and irresolute hero, in concealing—partly from a kind of dastardly, rakish, bravado, and partly from fear of his father's disapproval, as well as a certain misplaced deference to fraternal affection—his own ardent and honourable affection for the orphan girl to whom he is secretly married. The character of Castalio is similar to that of Jaffier, Carlos, and of Otway himself, judging from what we know of his relations with Mrs. Barry. Monimia is another Belvidera, though less powerfully conceived. They are exquisite types of womanhood, own sisters to Cordelia, Imogen, Desdemona. There is no local colour in the play, but we miss that in *Don Carlos* and *Venice Preserved* more particularly. Otway's scenes might be in abstract space. The poetry of the period of Charles II., William, and Anne, was singularly blind to the face of external nature, a very serious defect; not even Greek or Latin poetry was thus blind.

I have drawn a distinction between two kinds of poetry in drama—that of movement or crisis, and that of repose or contemplation. The poetry appropriate to the one condition must necessarily be different from that appropriate to the other, and he is so far a bad poet who confounds the species. It will be the second kind that can be transplanted to books of beautiful extracts, and lends itself to quotation, because that is more

germane to many similar circumstances; whereas the former belongs especially to the particular event or crisis. In the former species I have allowed that Otway is not rich. We look in vain for the poetry of Hamlet, of brooding, irresolute, melancholy; for the poetry of Lorenzo, that of music; or Portia, which is that of mercy; for any lovely words like those of Perdita, the very breath and symphony of flowers; for any accents like those of heart-stricken Aspatia, in her swan-song of desertion; or visionary anthem of Helen's ideal beauty, as in Marlowe. No Claudio out of Shakespeare has uttered a final word concerning physical death equal to this: "To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot"; no Cæsar has fixed for us the visible tokens of a born conspirator; no Jaques summed for us the seasons of human life. Nor are these mere "purple patches"; far from it, they are of the seamless garment's very warp and woof.

But, if we consider, we shall find that much of the poetry we love best in that earlier drama is the poetry of movement or supreme event; and this we do find in Otway, as the passages which I have already quoted, or mentioned, are sufficient to prove. We do find in him poetry parallel to that of mad Lear's heart-quaking utterance in presence of Cordelia, which commences—

> Pray do not mock me;
> I am a very foolish fond old man,

and ends—

> Do not laugh at me;
> For as I am a man, I think this lady
> To be my child Cordelia.

or to her answer—

> And so I am, I am!

She has some cause to be angry with him, but her sisters none, he says; and she answers "No cause! no cause!" That, which is, perhaps, the finest passage in all literature, has not one metaphor, one trope, one "precious" phrase; but any old injured madman might speak just so. When poor, laughable, dissolute old Falstaff, dying, "babbles o' green fields"; when Lear at the last apostrophises his dead Cordelia—

> Thou'lt come no more,
> Never, never, never, never, never! * * *
> Pray you, undo this button. Thank you, sir! * * *
> Do you see this? Look on her—look—her lips—

we can hardly bear to hear them. It is so much finer, because so much truer to nature than when those ingeniously poetical ladies, entreating the sepulture of their best beloved, urge that they are "rinsing their holy begging in their eyes." But Tourneur's Castiza takes our breath away when she adjures the trusted and reverenced mother, who has suffered her own better nature to be warped and darkened, and invites her daughter to suffer moral degradation, in the words—

> Mother, come from that poisonous woman there!

It is a gleam of heavenly light blinding us out of the gloom. And when the Duchess of Malfi in her last struggle entreats—

> I pray thee look thou givest my little boy
> Some syrup for his cold; and let the girl
> Say her prayers ere she sleep. Now what you please

we are reminded of the equally touching words of Belvidera about her child, and the last words of dying Monimia:

> When I am laid low in the grave, and quite forgotten,
> May'st thou be happy in a fairer bride!
> But none can ever love thee like Monimia. * * *
> I'm here; who calls me? Methought I heard a voice
> Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains
> When all his little flock's at feed before him * * *
> How my head swims. 'Tis very dark. Good night.

It is true that the poet, since he takes the liberty to translate into verse men's ordinary language, may also interpret and mould his story, together with the speech it may involve, artistically, according to his own genius. But then the turn of thought, of feeling and of phraseology must have verisimilitude, that is to say, must seem related, not only to the event as it might appear to the poet personally, but as it ought to appear to him when he has imagined himself into the character and circumstances represented. Thus the strange figure made use of by Jaffier in addressing Pierre, who is about to be tortured on the rack, is felt to be absolutely fitting. For anger, despair, remorse, will sometimes burst forth in hyperbole. Wisdom is justified of her children.

And now perhaps we may hardly be surprised to hear the consenting voice of great authorities place Otway very high among the masters of English tragedy. Dryden, though, when "fearing a rival near the throne," he had called Otway "a barren illiterate man," said afterwards: "The motions which are studied are never so natural as

those which break out in the height of a real passion. Mr. Otway possessed this part as thoroughly as any of the ancients or moderns." And again:

Charming his face and charming was his verse.

Addison says: "Otway has followed nature in the language of his tragedy, and therefore shines in the passionate parts more than any of our English poets." Goldsmith again: "The English language owes very little to Otway, though next to Shakespeare the greatest genius England has ever produced in tragedy." Then let us remember the beautiful lines of Collins:

But wherefore need I wander wide
To old Ilissus' distant side,
Deserted stream and mute!
Wild Arun too has heard thy strains,
And echo 'midst my native plains
Been soothed by Pity's lute.
There first the wren thy myrtles shed
On gentlest Otway's infant head,
To him thy cell was shown,
And while he sung the female heart,
With youth's soft notes unspoiled by art,
Thy turtles mixed their own.

And Coleridge, musing upon "mighty poets in their misery dead," in his "Monody on the death of Chatterton" sang:

Is this the land of song-ennobled line?
Is this the land where genius ne'er in vain
Poured forth his lofty strain?
Ah me, yet Spenser, gentlest bard divine,
Beneath chill disappointment's shade
His weary limbs in lonely anguish laid,
And o'er her darling dead,
Pity, hopeless, hung her head;
While 'mid the pelting of that merciless storm
Sunk to the cold earth Otway's famished form.

Respecting Otway's scenes of passionate affection, Sir Walter Scott says that they "rival and sometimes excel those of Shakespeare; more tears have been shed probably for the sorrows of Belvidera and Monimia than for those of Juliet and Desdemona."

Thomas Otway[1] was born March 3rd, 1651, at Trotton near Midhurst in Sussex, and was the only son of the Rev. Humphrey Otway, Rector of Wolbeding in the same county. He was educated at Wickeham School, Winchester, and at eighteen was entered a commoner of Christ Church College, Oxford, early in 1669. He does not display much learning, and probably did not study very hard, but preferred amusing himself with his friends, among whom was young Lord Falkland. He had been intended for the Church; but the death of his father, who, as he tells us, "left him no other patrimony than his faith and loyalty," probably obliged him to leave Oxford without taking a degree. In 1671 he went to London to seek his fortune there. At the theatre in Dorset Garden, Salisbury Court, all Otway's plays, except the last, were performed by the Duke of York's company; and here Otway himself made his first and only appearance as an actor, taking the part of the King in Mrs. Behn's *Forced Marriage*. This attempt was

[1] Respecting Otway's life, my chief authority is Thornton, who has prefixed the best sketch I know of to the best edition of the poet's works; but I have also consulted other authorities, and read Mr. Gosse's interesting essay in his "Seventeenth Century Studies," &c. Thornton's text has been usually followed in the present volume; with, however, numerous emendations, the result of collation with the early editions.

eminently unsuccessful. He seems now to have cultivated the society of men of rank and fashion, who tolerated him as a boon companion for the sake of his agreeable social qualities, but who, while they helped him to get rid of his money in many foolish ways, left him in the lurch when he needed them most. The young Earl of Plymouth, however, a natural son of the king, and a college friend, did befriend him. His premature death at Tangier, aged twenty-two, was a serious loss to Otway.

The dramatist's earliest play was *Alcibiades*, first printed in 1675. It is a poor production, though there are scenes in it of distinct promise. *Don Carlos* appeared in the year after, and won extraordinary favour, partly owing to the patronage of Rochester, who dropped an author as soon as he acquired, by merit or popularity, some independent standing, fancying that his own literary dictatorship might be thereby imperilled. Thus he had dropped Dryden, taken up Elkanah Settle, the "City poet," dropped him, and elevated Crowne. But Crowne's *Calisto* becoming too popular for the malignant wit, he transferred his patronage to Otway. In 1677 Otway produced two translations from the French, *Titus and Berenice*, from Racine, and *The Cheats of Scapin*, from Molière. All these were rhyming, so-called "heroic" plays, our playwrights herein following the French example. But Dryden, in the Prologue to *Aurungzebe*, having announced

that he would henceforth abandon the use of rhyme in tragedy, other writers soon followed his lead. The success of *Don Carlos* was the occasion of a coolness between Otway and Dryden, who, with the proverbial amiability of literary rivals, said some sharp things about one another; but we have seen how generously Dryden afterwards gave Otway his due meed of praise. To this period, says Thornton, we may probably assign a duel between Otway and Settle ("Doeg"), in which Settle is said to have misbehaved.

With the fine actress, Mrs. Barry, a daughter of Colonel Barry, who had sacrificed his fortune in the service of Charles I., Otway fell desperately in love. She had taken a part in his *Alcibiades*, and became famous by her representations of Belvidera and Monimia. To this affection, with all the depth of his character, Otway remained constant; but Mrs. Barry did not return it; at any rate, she deemed the attractions of Lord Rochester superior. Possibly Mr. Gosse may be right in thinking that she was a cold and calculating woman, who would reject a penniless lover, yet keep him dangling attendance upon her if he wrote parts that suited her as an actress. In this case, however, it seems odd that such parts should have suited her; and it would be touching to note how Otway must have idealized his lady in writing them for her. But she may honestly have preferred the witty and poundful peer to the tragic and penniless poet—though Otway was a good-

looking man with very fine eyes, and Rochester, according to Otway (a prejudiced witness), looked like an owl. Yet, judging by Rochester's portraits, he was distinguished, though rather feminine in appearance. However, Rochester was as sincerely attached to Mrs. Barry as such a rake could be, and she really owed him much, for he personally educated her in the duties of her profession. Otway loved "not wisely, but too well," as we know from the remarkable love letters, reprinted in the appendix to the present volume. With characteristic hotheadedness and weakness combined he could not resolve to renounce her, even though he knew she was Rochester's mistress. Hence the insolent bitterness of Rochester's attack upon him in his "Session of the Poets," in which he alludes to Otway's pitiable condition on his return from Flanders.[1] For even Otway's human nature had to yield at last, and he could no longer bear to hang about the Duke's Theatre, as had been his wont, in order to get a glimpse of his lady. He therefore obtained from the Earl of Plymouth a cornet's commission in a new regiment

[1] Tom Otway came next, Tom Shadwell's dear Zany,
And swears for heroics he writes best of any;
Don Carlos his pockets so amply had filled
That his mange was quite cured and his lice were all killed;
But Apollo had seen his face on the stage,
And prudently did not think fit to engage
The scum of a playhouse for the prop of an age.

Wood mentions that it was reported the poet came back from Flanders "mangy, and covered with vermin."

of horse, which was sent out at this time (1678) to join the army under Monmouth in Flanders—not, surely, as Mr. Gosse says, in the service of France, but, on the contrary, to relieve Mons in the Dutch interest. Very shortly after, however, the troops were disbanded and recalled, while the money voted by the Commons for their payment was shamefully misappropriated, they being paid only by debentures, the credit of which was so low that they were hardly saleable. This is why the poet came home in so miserable a plight, and not on account of any want of courage.

It was like Rochester to reproach him on this score—the man who showed the white feather to Lord Mulgrave, and made lackeys cudgel Dryden in Rose Alley. But Otway gave him as good as he got in the "Poet's Complaint." The matter is explained in the Epilogue to *Caius Marius*, which he produced in 1680, having written most of it in camp abroad. It is a barefaced, and indeed avowed plagiarism from *Romeo and Juliet*, though one or two scenes are his own, and have some merit. Marius, at all events, was a rather more dignified representative of Shaftesbury than old Antonio in *Venice Preserved*. This play occupied the place of *Romeo and Juliet* on our stage for seventy years. With a more avowed party motive he likewise published in the same year "The Poet's Complaint of his Muse." When we think of "Absalom and Achitophel," the contrast is woeful indeed. All Otway's poems are bad, except the

Epistle to Duke, his friend. The blunted insipidity of his conventional diction is worthy of Pope's followers. Before leaving England he had written his first comedy, *Friendship in Fashion*, which appeared in 1678.

In the year 1680 Otway's second great play, *The Orphan*, appeared. Voltaire attacked it furiously, and will allow no merit to *le tendre Otway*. Tenderness anywhere was not likely to find favour with the *tigre-singe*, whose fascinating wit was of an icy brilliance. But Jeremy Collier also attacked the play on other grounds, in his "Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage." Mrs. Barry has recorded that in the character of Monimia she could never pronounce the words "Poor Castalio!" without tears. May she not have been thinking of another Castalio? Let us believe it! Ah! if only Mrs. Barry had been the Belvidera of her poet's dream, she might have saved him from his evil genius, from his selfish patrons, and from himself.

In 1681 Otway produced *The Soldier's Fortune*, a comedy which contains allusions to his own adventures abroad, and is the only contemporary play not dedicated to a person of quality, being dedicated to Bentley, the publisher. Depressed by his hopeless passion, "alternately elevated with promises and dejected by scorn and neglect, caressed for his wit, despised for his poverty, and exposed to all those attendant ills, which a generous spirit feels more acutely than actual

privation, neglect, wrongs real and imaginary, the altered eye of friends," we can hardly wonder at the gloomy tone which he assumed in the Epilogue to this play. Can we not picture him with those large, limpid, wistful eyes looking for the face he most wanted among the crowds, pre-occupied or listless, that passed in the gathering twilight of that afternoon, which he mentions in the last of those letters to Mrs. Barry, lingering among strange faces of promenaders under the trees of the gay Mall, looking long for her who never came, never fulfilled her promise to meet him? This seems to have been the turning point in Otway's career. Failing in this last attempt to win his lady's love, and sinking under accumulated debt, he, like how many others, surrendered himself to those habits of inebriety, which insidiously promised him consolation. And yet his creative powers were maturing daily, for his greatest work, *Venice Preserved*, was brought upon the stage in 1682.

Since Otway's plays were well received, it may seem strange that he should have remained so poor. But, in the first place, he was evidently one of those generous, reckless good fellows like "Goldy," and Sheridan, who spend all they have, and more too. And, in the second place, the profits of the playhouse were very small. Theatrical amusements were not the general resort of the people—a serious disadvantage, as Scott observes, to the art, as well as to the purse,

of the playwright. Religious scruples still withheld many, as in Commonwealth days; and others were kept away by the indecency then in vogue. The most popular play did not remain long on the boards. In Otway's time, moreover, an author had only one benefit from the representation, which was on the third night. Southerne was the first to have two benefits, and it was not until 1729 that the profits of three representations became the right of the author. Gildon says that Otway got a hundred pounds a piece for *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserved*, while old Jacob Tonson bought the copyright of *Venice Preserved* for fifteen pounds. The poet was sometimes in such straits that he had to pawn his third day for fifty pounds. He could not have made much by his few prologues and occasional poems.

Otway's last play was a comedy called *The Atheist*, a continuation of *The Soldier's Fortune*, represented in 1683, or the following year, at the Theatre Royal by the united companies, who had amalgamated in 1682, and removed to Drury Lane. Charles II. died in February, 1685, and Otway thereupon published a poem called "Windsor Castle," in which he praised the late king, and exulted over the accession of James. His praises of Charles were probably not much more sincere than those which he, and other writers of the day, lavished upon people of rank in their dedications for the sake of a few guineas. More guineas are to be had now-a-days by flattering the whims and

tastes of that "many-headed" monarch, under whose reign we have the honour to live. In the so-called Augustan age, literary merit was systematically neglected. Witness Butler and Cowley. Yet Otway was the son of a loyalist, and ever faithful to the Court. Nor was Charles incapable of appreciating talent. But Otway, to use his own words, only got the "pension of a prince's praise"; and a gracious command to lampoon the greatest statesman of the time, which he did accordingly. Praise of one who cannot be a rival is an inexpensive form of present. It appears, however, that two of the royal mistresses were more generous—Nell Gwynne and the Duchess of Portsmouth, whose bounty, "extended to him in his last extremity," he extols in the dedication of *Venice Preserved.*

Otway had withdrawn from the importunate clamour of creditors to an obscure public-house, the sign of the Bull, on Tower Hill; and here, on the 14th of April, 1685, at the premature age of thirty-four, he died. His body was conveyed thence to the Church of St. Clement Danes, and there deposited in a vault. About the circumstances of his death there is a conflict of evidence. The story that has gained currency is probably not the true one; only one early biographer is our authority for it. He states that, having long been insufficiently fed, Otway one day sallied forth in a starving state, and begged a shilling from a gentleman in a coffee house, saying, "I am the

poet Otway." This person, surprised and distressed, gave him a guinea. With it he bought a roll of bread, and began to devour it with the rage of hunger; but, incapable of swallowing from long abstinence, he was choked with the first mouthful. Other writers make no mention of this incident, and Wood is not only silent on the subject, but states that in his "sickness" (implying gradual decay) he composed a congratulatory poem on the inauguration of James II. Spence, moreover, who had the anecdote from Dennis the critic, tells quite a different story. He relates that Otway had an intimate friend named Blakiston, who was murdered in the street, and that, to revenge the deed, Otway pursued the assassin on foot as far as Dover, where he was seized with a fever, occasioned by fatigue, privation, and excitement. On his return to London, being heated, he drank water, which was the immediate occasion of his death. Yet undoubtedly insufficient nourishment must have accelerated his end. It is quite possible, therefore, that the anecdote about the guinea and the roll may be substantially true, although this circumstance may not have been the actual cause of death.

The ardour and constancy of Otway's personal attachments are very notable all through his career—witness his friendship with Shadwell (though Mr. Gosse strangely calls Shadwell his enemy), with an unknown person whom he names *Senander*, and especially with Duke, whose

expressions of fondness for him are very warm. And it now appears that he fell a victim to this devoted comradeship, which he has so forcibly delineated in his tragedy. "Whom the gods love die young." Otway is with Shelley, Keats and Byron, with Marlowe and with Chatterton.

RODEN NOEL.

*** OTWAY made some translations from Ovid and Horace. He also wrote prologues to Lee's *Constantine* and Mrs. Behn's *City Heiress*, with an epistle to Creech on his translation of Lucretius, besides a few miscellaneous poems, prologues, and epilogues. A translation from the French, the *History of Triumvirates*, was published a year after his decease. Moreover, it was reported that he had been engaged on an original tragedy at the time of his death; Betterton, the actor and manager, advertised for this play, but it was never found. All authorities, except Mr. Gosse, agree in rejecting as a forgery the play named *Heroic Friendship*, which a bookseller long afterwards (in 1719) attempted to palm off upon the public as the lost tragedy of Otway. While destitute of all external evidence for genuineness, it is usually regarded as a contemptible production, equally destitute of internal evidence. Mr. Gosse indeed urges a similarity in the principal character to the heroes of Otway. But of course to produce such a similarity would be the obvious resort of any forger. It was printed, though never acted. Gildon relates that Otway was very fond of punch, and that the last thing he wrote was a song in praise of it.

William Oldys, in his famous annotated copy of Langbaine's *Dramatic Poets*, in the British Museum, thus writes of Otway: "There is an excellent and beautiful picture of Mr. Otway, who was a fine, portly, graceful man, now among the poetical collection of Lord Chesterfield

(I think it was painted by John Ryley), in a full bottom wig, and nothing like that quakerish figure which Knapton has impost upon the world." Interlined is the following: "He was of middle size, about 5 ft. 7 in., inclinable to corpulency, had thoughtful, yet lively, and, as it were, speaking eyes."

I am indebted to Dr. Grosart for the foregoing quotation, and have to express my thanks to Mr. S. W. Orson for numerous textual suggestions and emendations.

DON CARLOS,

PRINCE OF SPAIN.

Principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus est.—
HOR., Ep. 17, Lib. 1.[1]

[1] To gain by honourable ways
A great man's favour is no vulgar praise.—*Comington.*

THOMAS OTWAY.

IT is now a commonplace of criticism that the epoch of Charles II. was an epoch of decline and degradation for the British drama. The complacent self-felicitations of Dryden in his early days on the superior refinement of his own age, and the consequent superiority of his own plays to those of Elizabeth and James, dispose us to insist upon the contrary view with somewhat emphatic asperity. Yet later, Dryden did ample justice to "the giant race before the flood"—the pre-rebellion poets, by himself so named—expressly repudiating French influence moreover. Indeed, the great wave of dramatic energy had culminated, and was subsiding. The age so extolled by Dryden was, in many respects, unfavourable to dramatic poetry. The Puritan, with his grave, earnest tone, righteous indignation against evil living, and crude, sour, uncultivated other-worldliness, had dehumanized

BESIDES the writers mentioned in my Introduction, Campistron, a pupil of Racine, founded a play called *Andronic* on this same history of *Don Carlos*. Some Spanish historians, in the interest of Philip, have tried to blacken the character of his son. But the Abbé de San Real (who has been called the French Sallust) seems to have estimated him rightly, while the dramatists have, on the whole, adopted the Frenchman's conception, which was apparently derived from reliable Spanish sources. The motto prefixed from Horace is in allusion to the fact that this play received the approbation of the King and the Duke of York. It had a long success at the theatre, and we may agree with those who called it, as Otway tells us in the preface, the best "heroic" play of the time—containing, as it does, far less of rant and confusion, but more of nature and passion, than the "heroic" plays of Dryden—though *Aurungzebe* may not be far behind it. Booth, the actor, was informed by Betterton that *Don Carlos* continued for several years to attract larger audiences than *The Orphan* or *Venice Preserved*. It was first represented at the Duke's Theatre in the year 1676, and was published in the same year.

Philip II., son of the Emperor Charles V., became King of Naples and Sicily in 1554 on his father's abdication, and King Consort of England by his marriage with Mary two years after he ascended the Spanish throne. In 1557 he gained the victory of St. Quentin, which might have made him master of France, but he did not follow it up, being, it is said, so elated and yet terrified that he vowed: first, never to engage in another fight, and secondly, to found a monastery in honour of St. Lawrence at Escorial. Later came the great rebellion of the Low Countries, which, in spite of Alva's ability, sanguinary cruelty, and persecutions, resulted in the independence of "the United

Provinces," and the triumph of the reformed faith. Philip subdued Portugal, and sent the huge Spanish Armada to conquer England, the illustrious heretic Elizabeth having succeeded to Mary. But the storms and the English together were too much for him. He showed resignation and dignity, however, when the admiral in command announced this misfortune to him. He married Elizabeth of Valois after Mary's death.

It is probable that Don Carlos inherited the personal pride and hauteur of his race, and he is said to have treated Alva with rudeness on a public occasion, only because the Duke was a little late in paying his respects to him. Alva, as a noble, had his share of pride, and being, moreover, malignant, never forgave this.

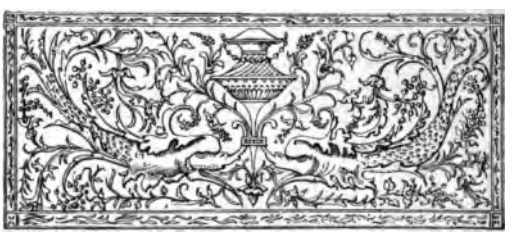
But the rivalry of these two personages in desiring the government of the revolted Netherlands is a more probable cause of the affront, for it seems to have been just before the Duke proceeded thither as Governor, when he went to take leave of Carlos, that it occurred. Philip had refused the post to his son, and given it to Alva. Carlos is even said by some to have threatened the Duke with his sword; but, if so, it seems likely that something in the words or triumphant demeanour of the latter provoked the hot-headed youth beyond endurance. This spirited and aspiring Prince was evidently far more liberal in religion and politics than his father, a disposition likely to be intensified by the fact that his father persistently kept him in tutelage, and forbade him all participation in the management of public affairs, which he so ardently coveted. That he entered into correspondence with the gallant men striving for liberty of conscience and nationality in the Low Countries seems certain. This was a pretext and motive for his arrest, imprisonment, and murder. But jealous suspicion that the Queen, promised and betrothed by Philip himself to his own son, cared too much for that son, and more than suspicion that Carlos cared too much for her, afforded a motive yet more powerful. Elizabeth of France (daughter of Henry II.) was put to death about the same time, and the Prince of Orange openly accused Philip of these murders, alleging that they were committed in order that he might be free to marry his own niece, Anne of Austria. Carlos is variously reported to have been killed by poison, strangulation, or opening his veins in a bath. Philip died in 1598. His character has been well suggested and outlined in a recent play, Lord Tennyson's "Queen Mary."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PHILIP II., King of Spain.
Don CARLOS, his Son.
Don JOHN of Austria.
Marquis of POSA, the Prince's Confidant.
RUY-GOMEZ.
Officer of the Guards.

QUEEN OF SPAIN.
Duchess of EBOLI, Wife of Ruy-Gomez.
HENRIETTA.
GARCIA.

SCENE—THE COURT OF SPAIN.



DON CARLOS,

PRINCE OF SPAIN.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

KING *and* QUEEN, Don CARLOS, *the* Marquis of POSA, RUY-GOMEZ, *the* Duchess of EBOLI, HENRIETTA, GARCIA, Attendants, *and* Guards *discovered.*

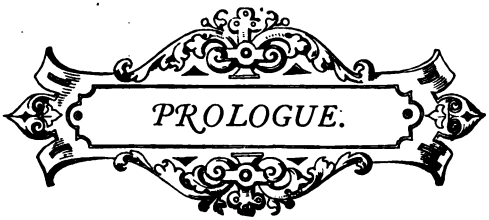
KING. Happy the monarch, on whose brow no cares
Add weight to the bright diadem he wears;
Like me, in all that he can wish for, blest.
Renown and love, the gentlest calms of rest,
And peace, adorn my brow, enrich my breast.
To me great nations tributary are;
Though, whilst my vast dominions spread so far,
Where most I reign, I must pay homage, here.
[*To the* QUEEN.
Approach, bright mistress of my purest vows:
Now show me him that more religion owes
To Heaven, or to its altars more devoutly bows.

they are, I am sure I never disobliged them: nor have they (thank my good fortune) much injured me. In the meanwhile I forgive them, and, since I am out of the reach on't, leave them to chew the cud on their own venom. I am well satisfied I had the greatest party of men of wit and sense on my side; amongst which I can never enough acknowledge the unspeakable obligations I received from the Earl of R.,[1] who, far above what I am ever able to deserve from him, seemed almost to make it his business to establish it in the good opinion of the King and his Royal Highness; from both of whom I have since received confirmation of their good liking of it, and encouragement to proceed. And it is to him, I must in all gratitude confess, I owe the greatest part of my good success in this, and on whose indulgency I extremely build my hopes of a next. I dare not presume to take to myself what a great many, and those (I am sure) of good judgment too, have been so kind to afford me—viz., that it is the best heroic play that has been written of late; for, I thank Heaven, I am not yet so vain. But this I may modestly boast of, which the author[2] of the French *Berenice* has done before me, in his preface to that play, that it never failed to draw tears from the eyes of the auditors; I mean, those whose hearts were capable of so noble a pleasure: for it was not my business to take such as only come to a playhouse to see farce-fools, and laugh at their own deformed pictures. Though a certain writer that shall be nameless[3] (but you shall guess at him by what follows), being asked his opinion of this play, very gravely cocked, and cried, "I'gad, he knew not a line in it he would be author of."[4] But he is a fine facetious witty person, as my friend Sir Formal has it; and to be even with him, I know a comedy of his, that has not so much as a quibble in it that I would be author of. And so, Reader, I bid him and thee Farewell.

[1] Rochester, whose motive in patronising Otway at this time was solely a desire to mortify Dryden.

[2] Racine. [3] Dryden.

[4] It will be remembered that *I'gad* is an expression frequently used by Bayes in the *Rehearsal*; a character written in ridicule of Davenant, Dryden, the Howards, &c., by the Duke of Buckingham (Dryden's Zimri), Butler, and others.



When first our author took this play in hand,
He doubted much, and long was at a stand.
He knew the fame and memory of kings
Were to be treated of as sacred things,
Not as they're represented in this age,
Where they appear the lumber of the stage;
Used only just for reconciling tools,
Or what is worse, made villains all, or fools.
Besides, the characters he shows to-night,
He found were very difficult to write:
He found the fame of France and Spain at stake,
Therefore long paused, and feared which part to take;
Till this his judgment safest understood,
To make them both heroic as he could.
But now the greatest stop was yet unpassed;
He found himself, alas! confined too fast.
He is a man of pleasure, sirs, like you,
And therefore hardly could to business bow;
Till at the last he did this conquest get,
To make his pleasure whetstone to his wit;
So sometimes for variety he writ.
But as those blockheads, who discourse by rote,
Sometimes speak sense, although they rarely know't;
So he scarce knew to what his work would grow,
But 'twas a play, because it would be so:
Yet well he knows this is a weak pretence,
For idleness is the worst want of sense.
Let him not now of carelessness be taxed,
He'll write in earnest, when he writes the next:
Meanwhile,—
Prune his superfluous branches, never spare;
Yet do it kindly, be not too severe:
He may bear better fruit another year.

Nothing we found that promised not delight:
For when rude shades deprived us of the light,
As we had gazed all day, we dreamt all night.
But, after all these labours undergone,
A cruel father thus destroys his son;
In their full height my choicest hopes beguiles,
And robs me of the fruit of all my toils.
My dearest Posa, thou wert ever kind;
Bring thy best counsel, and direct my mind.

Re-enter RUY-GOMEZ.

Ruy-Gom. Still he is here. My lord!

Don Car. Your business now? [brow.

Ruy-Gom. I've with concern beheld your clouded
Ah! though you've lost a beauty well might make
Your strictest honour and your duty shake,
Let not a father's ills[1] misguide your mind,
But be obedient, though he has proved unkind.

Don Car. Hence, cynic, to dull slaves thy morals
I have no leisure now to hear thee preach: [teach;
Still you'll usurp a power o'er my will.

Ruy-Gom. Sir, you my services interpret ill:
Nor need it be so soon forgot that I
Have been your guardian from your infancy.
When to my charge committed, I alone
Instructed you how to expect a crown;
Taught you ambition, and war's noblest arts,
How to lead armies, and to conquer hearts;
Whilst, though but young,
You would with pleasure read of sieges got,
And smile to hear of bloody battles fought:
And, still, though not control, I may advise,

Don Car. Alas! thy pride wears a too thin disguise:
Too well I know the falsehood of thy soul,
Which to my father rendered me so foul
That hardly as his son a smile I've known,

[1] *i.e.* Faults.

But always as a traitor met his frown.
My forward honour was ambition called;
Or, if my friends my early fame extolled,
You damped my father's smiles still as they sprung,
Persuading I repined he lived too long.
So all my hopes by you were frustrate made,
And, robbed of sunshine, withered in the shade.
Whilst, my good patriot! you disposed the crown
Out of my reach, to have it in your own.
But I'll prevent your policy—

Ruy-Gom. My lord,
This accusation is unjust and hard.
The king, your father, would not so upbraid
My age: is all my service thus repaid?
But I will hence, and let my master hear
How generously you reward my care;
Who, on my just complaint, I doubt not, will
At least redress the injuries I feel. [*Exit.*

M. of Posa. Alas! my lord, you too severely urge
Your fate; his interest with the king is large.
Besides, you know he has already seen
The transports of your passion for the queen.
The use he may of that advantage make
You ought at least to avoid, but for her sake.

Don. Car. Ah! my dear friend, thou'st touched my tenderest part;
I never yet learned the dissembling art.
Go, call him back; tell him that I implore
His pardon, and will ne'er offend him more.
The queen! kind Heaven, make her thy nearest care!
Oh! fly, o'ertake him ere he goes too far.

[*Exit* Marquis of Posa.

How are we bandied up and down by fate!
By so much more unhappy as we're great.
A prince, and heir to Spain's great monarch born,
I'm forced to court a slave whom most I scorn;
Who like a bramble 'mongst a cedar's boughs,

Vexes his peace under whose shades he grows.
Now he returns: assist me falsehood—down,
Thou rebel passion—

Re-enter RUY-GOMEZ *and the* Marquis of POSA.

Sir, I fear I've done
[*To* RUY-GOMEZ.
You wrong; but, if I have, you can forgive.
Heaven! can I do this abject thing, and live? [*Aside.*

Ruy-Gom. Ah, my good lord, it makes too large
When to his vassal thus a prince descends; [amends,
Though it was something rigid and unkind,
To upbraid your faithful servant and your friend.

Don Car. Alas! no more; all jealousies shall cease;
Between us two let there be henceforth peace.
So may just Heaven assist me when I sue,
As I to Gomez always will be true.

Ruy-Gom. Stay, sir, and for this mighty favour take
All the return sincerity can make.
Blest in your father's love, as I'm in yours,
May not one fear disturb your happy hours!
Crowned with success may all your wishes be,
And you ne'er find worse enemies than me!
[*Exeunt* Don CARLOS *and* Marquis of POSA.

Nor, spite of all his greatness, shall he need:
Of too long date his ruin is decreed.
Spain's early hopes of him have been my fears;
'Twas I the charge had of his tender years,
And read in all the progress of his growth,
An untamed, haughty, hot, and furious youth;
A will unruly, and a spirit wild;
At all my precepts still with scorn he smiled.
Or when, by the power I from his father had,
Any restraint was on his pleasures laid,
Ushered with frowns on me his soul would rise,
And threaten future vengeance from his eyes.
But now to all my fears I bid adieu;

For, prince, I'll humble both your fate and you.
Here comes the star by whom my course I steer.

Re-enter Duchess of EBOLI.

Welcome, my love!

D. of Eboli. My lord, why stay you here,
Losing the pleasures of this happy night?
When all the court are melting in delight,
You toil with the dull business of the state.

Ruy-Gom. Only, my fair one, how to make thee great.
Thou takest up all the business of my heart,
And only to it pleasure canst impart.
Say, say, my goddess, when shall I be blest?
It is an age since I was happy last.

D. of Eboli. My lord, I come not hither now to hear
Your love, but offer something to your ear.
If you have well observed, you must have seen,
To-day, some strange disorders in the queen.

Ruy-Gom. Yes, such as youthful brides do still express,
Impatient longings for the happiness.
Approaching joys will so disturb the soul,
As needles always tremble near the pole.

D. of Eboli. Come, come, my lord, seem not so blind; too well
I've seen the wrongs which you from Carlos feel;
And know your judgment is too good to lose
Advantage, where you may so safely choose.
Say now, if I inform you how you may
With full revenge all your past wrongs repay—

Ruy-Gom. Blest oracle! speak how it may be done:
My will, my life, my hopes, are all thy own.

D. of Eboli. Hence then, and with your strictest cunning try
What of the queen and prince you can descry;
Watch every look, each quick and subtle glance;
Then we'll from all produce such circumstance
As shall the king's new jealousy advance.

Nay, sir, I'll try what mighty love you show:
If you will make me great, begin it now.
How, sir, d'ye stand considering what to do?
Ruy-Gom. No, but methinks I view from hence a king,
A queen, and prince, three goodly flowers spring:
Whilst on them like a subtle bee I'll prey,
Till, so their strength and virtue drawn away,
Unable to recover, each shall droop,
Grow pale, and fading hang his withered top:
Then, fraught with thyme, triumphant back I'll come,
And unlade all the precious sweets at home. [*Exit.*
D. of Eboli. In thy fond policy, blind fool, go on,
And make what haste thou canst to be undone,
Whilst I have nobler business of my own.
Was I bred up in greatness; have I been
Nurtured with glorious hopes to be a queen;
Made love my study, and with practised charms
Prepared myself to meet a monarch's arms;
At last to be condemned to the embrace
Of one whom nature made to her disgrace,
An old, imperfect, feeble dotard, who
Can only tell (alas!) what he would do?
On him to throw away my youth and bloom,
As jewels that are lost to enrich a tomb?
No, though all hopes are in a husband dead,
Another path to happiness I'll tread;
Elsewhere find joys which I'm in him denied:
Yet, while he can, let the slave serve my pride.
Still I'll in pleasure live, in glory shine;
The gallant, youthful Austria shall be mine:
To him with all my force of charms I'll move:
Let others toil for greatness, whilst I love. [*Exit.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*An Orange Grove, near the Palace.*

Enter Don JOHN of Austria.

DON JOHN. Why should dull law rule nature, who first made
That law by which herself is now betrayed?
Ere man's corruptions made him wretched, he
Was born most noble that was born most free:
Each of himself was lord, and, unconfined,
Obeyed the dictates of his god-like mind.
Law was an innovation brought in since,
When fools began to love obedience,
And called their slavery safety and defence.
My glorious father got me in his heat,
When all he did was eminently great:
When warlike Belgia felt his conquering power,
And the proud Germans owned him emperor,
Why should it be a stain then on my blood,
Because I came not in the common road,
But born obscure, and so more like a god?
No; though his diadem another wear,
At least to all his pleasures I'll be heir.
Here I should meet my Eboli, my fair.

Enter Duchess of EBOLI.

She comes; as the bright Cyprian goddess moves,
When loose, and in her chariot drawn by doves,
She rides to meet the warlike god she loves.

D. of Eboli. Alas! my lord, you know not with what fear
And hazard I am come to meet you here.

Don John. Oh, banish it: lovers like us should fly,
And, mounted by their wishes, soar on high,
Where softest ecstasies and transports are,
While fear alone disturbs the lower air.

D. of Eboli. But who is safe when eyes are every-[where?
Or, if we could with happiest secrecy
Enjoy these sweets, oh, whither shall we fly
To escape that sight whence we can nothing hide?

Don John. Alas! lay this religion now aside;
I'll show thee one more pleasant, that which Jove
Set forth to the old world, when from above
He came himself, and taught his mortals love.

D. of Eboli. Will nothing then quench your unruly [flame?
My lord, you might consider who I am.

Don John. I know you're her I love, what should [I more
Regard?

D. of Eboli. [*Aside.*] By Heaven, he's brave!—
But can so poor
A thought possess your breast, to think that I
Will brand my name with lust and infamy?

Don John. Those who are noblest born should higher prize
Love's sweets. Oh! let me fly into those eyes!
There's something in them leads my soul astray:
As he who in a necromancer's glass
Beholds his wished-for fortune by him pass,
Yet still with greedy eyes
Pursues the vision as it glides away.

D. of Eboli. Protect me, Heaven! I dare no longer stay;

Your looks speak danger; I feel something too
That bids me fly, yet will not let me go. [*Half aside.*

Don John. Take vows and prayers if ever I prove false.

See at your feet the humble Austria falls. [*Kneels.*

D. of Eboli. Rise, rise. [Don JOHN *rises.*] My lord, why would you thus deceive? [*Sighs.*

Don John. How many ways to wound me you contrive!
Speak, wouldst thou have an empire at thy feet?
Say, wouldst thou rule the world? I'll conquer it.

D. of Eboli. No; above empire far I could prize
If you would be but— [you,

Don John. What?

D. of Eboli. For ever true.

Don John. That thou mayst ne'er have cause to fear those harms,
I'll be confined for ever in thy arms:
Nay, I'll not one short minute from thee stray;
Myself I'll on thy tender bosom lay,
Till in its warmths I'm melted all away.

Enter GARCIA.

Gar. Madam, your lord—

D. of Eboli. Oh! fly, or I'm undone. [*Exit* GARCIA.

Don John. Must I without thy blessing then be gone? [*Kisses her hand.*

D. of Eboli. Think you that this discretion merits one? [*Pulls it back.*

Don John. I'm awed:
As a sick wretch, that on his death-bed lies,
Loth with his friends to part, just as he dies,
Thus sends his soul in wishes from his eyes. [*Exit.*

D. of Eboli. O Heaven! what charms in youth and vigour are!
Yet he in conquest is not gone too far;
Too easily I'll not myself resign:

Ere I am his, I'll make him surely mine;
Draw him by subtle baits into the trap,
Till he's too far got in to make escape;
About him swiftly the soft snare I'll cast,
And when I have him there, I'll hold him fast.

Enter RUY-GOMEZ.

Ruy-Gom. Thus unaccompanied I subtly range
The solitary paths of dark revenge:
The fearful deer in herds to coverts run,
While beasts of prey affect to roam alone.

D. of Eboli. Ah! my dear lord, how do you spend your hours?
You little think what my poor heart endures;
Whilst, with your absence tortured, I in vain
Pant after joys I ne'er can hope to gain.

Ruy-Gom. You cannot my unkindness sure upbraid;
You should forgive those faults yourself have made.
Remember you the task you gave?

D. of Eboli. 'Tis true;
Your pardon, for I do remember now. [*Sighs.*
If I forgot, 'twas love had all my mind;
And 'tis no sin, I hope, to be too kind.

Ruy-Gom. How happy am I in a faithful wife!
O thou most precious blessing of my life!

D. of Eboli. Does then success attend upon your toil?
I long to see you revel in the spoil.

Ruy-Gom. What strictest diligence could do, I've done,
To incense an angry father 'gainst his son.
I to advantage told him all that's past,
Described with art each amorous glance they cast:
So that this night he shunned the marriage-bed,
Which through the court has various murmurs spread.

Enter the KING, *attended by the* Marquis of POSA.

See where he comes with fury in his eyes:
Kind Heaven, but grant the storm may higher rise!

If't grow too loud, I'll lurk in some dark cell,
And laugh to hear my magic work so well.

King. What's all my glory, all my pomp? how
Is fading greatness! or how vain is power! [poor
Where all the mighty conquests I have seen?
I, who o'er nations have victorious been,
Now cannot quell one little foe within.
Cursed jealousy, that poisons all love's sweets!
How heavy on my heart the invader sits!
O Gomez, thou hast given my mortal wound.

Ruy-Gom. What is't does so your royal thoughts confound?
A king his power unbounded ought to have,
And, ruling all, should not be passion's slave.

King. Thou counsell'st well, but art no stranger
To the sad cause of what I now endure. [sure
Know'st thou what poison thou didst lately give,
And dost not wonder to behold me live?

Ruy-Gom. I only did as by my duty tied,
And never studied any thing beside.

King. I do not blame thy duty or thy care:
Quickly, what passed between them more, declare.
How greedily my soul to ruin flies!
As he who in a fever burning lies
First of his friends does for a drop implore,
Which tasted once, unable to give o'er,
Knows 'tis his bane, yet still thirsts after more.
Oh, then—

Ruy-Gom. I fear that you'll interpret wrong;
Tis true, they gazed, but 'twas not very long. [said?

King. Lie still, my heart! Not long, was't that you

Ruy-Gom. No longer than they in your presence stayed.

King. No longer? Why, a soul in less time flies
To Heaven; and they have changed theirs at their
Hence, abject fears, begone! she's all divine! [eyes.
Speak, friends, can angels in perfection sin?

Ruy-Gom. Angels, that shine above, do oft bestow
Their influence on poor mortals here below.
King. But Carlos is my son, and always near;
Seems to move with me in my glorious sphere.
True, she may shower promiscuous blessings down
On slaves that gaze for what falls from a crown;
But when too kindly she his brightness sees,
It robs my lustre to add more to his.
But oh! I dare not think
That those eyes should at least so humble be
To stoop to him, when they had vanquished me.
M. of Posa. Sir, I am proud to think I know the prince,
That he of virtue has too great a sense
To cherish but a thought beyond the bound
Of strictest duty. He to me has owned
How much was to his former passion due,
Yet still confessed he above all prized you.
Ruy-Gom. You better reconcile, sir, than advise:
Be not more charitable than you're wise.
The king is sick, and we should give him ease,
But first find out the depth of his disease.
Too sudden cures have oft pernicious grown;
We must not heal up festered wounds too soon.
King. By this then you a power would o'er me gain,
Wounding to let me linger in the pain.
I'm stung, and won't the torture long endure:
Serpents that wound have blood those wounds to cure.
Ruy-Gom. Good Heaven forbid that I should ever dare
To question virtue in a queen so fair,
Though she her eyes cast on your glorious son!
Men oft see treasures, and yet covet none.
King. Think not to blind me with dark ironies,
The truth disguised in obscure contraries.
No, I will trace his windings; all her dark
And subtlest paths, each little action mark,
If she prove false, as yet I fear, she dies.

Enter QUEEN *attended, and* HENRIETTA.

Ha! here! Oh, let me turn away my eyes,
For all around she'll her bright beams display:
Should I to gaze on the wild meteor stay,
Spite of myself I shall be led astray.

[*Exeunt* KING *and* Marquis of POSA.

Queen. How scornfully he is withdrawn!
Sure ere his love he'd let me know his power,
As Heaven oft thunders ere it sends a shower.
This Spanish gravity is very odd:
All things are by severity so awed,
That little Love dares hardly peep abroad.

Hen. Alas! what can you from old age expect,
When frail uneasy men themselves neglect?
Some little warmth perhaps may be behind,
Though such as in extinguished fires you'll find;
Where some remains of heat the ashes hold,
Which, if for more you open, straight are cold.

Queen. 'Twas interest and safety of the state,—
Interest, that bold imposer on our fate;
That always to dark ends misguides our wills,
And with false happiness smooths o'er our ills.
It was by that unhappy France was led,
When, though by contract I should Carlos wed,
I was an offering made to Philip's bed.
Why sigh'st thou, Henrietta?

Hen. Who is't can
Know your sad fate, and yet from grief refrain?
With pleasure oft I've heard you smiling tell
Of Carlos' love.

Queen. And did it please you well?
In that brave prince's courtship there did meet
All that we could obliging call, or sweet.
At every point he with advantage stood;
Fierce as a lion, if provoked abroad;
Else soft as angels, charming as a god.

Hen. One so accomplished, and who loved you too,

With what resentments must he part with you!
Methinks I pity him——But oh! in vain:
He's both above my pity and my pain. [*Aside.*
Queen. What means this strange disorder?
Hen. Yonder view
That which I fear will discompose you too.

Enter Don CARLOS *and* Marquis of POSA.

Queen. Alas, the prince! There to my mind
Something that in me moves unusual fears. [appears
Away, Henrietta— [*Offers to go.*
Don Car. Why would you be gone?
Is Carlos' sight ungrateful to you grown?
If 'tis, speak: in obedience I'll retire.
Queen. No, you may speak, but must advance no nigher.
Don Car. Must I then at that awful distance sue,
As our forefathers were compelled to do,
When they petitions made at that great shrine,
Where none but the high priest might enter in?
Let me approach; I've nothing for your ear,
But what's so pure it might be offered there.
Queen. Too long 'tis dangerous for me here to stay:
If you must speak, proceed: what would you say?
[Don CARLOS *kneels.*
Nay, this strange ceremony pray give o'er.
Don Car. Was I ne'er in this posture seen before?
Ah! can your cruel heart so soon resign
All sense of these sad sufferings of mine?
To your more just remembrance, if you can,
Recall how fate seemed kindly to ordain
That once you should be mine; which I believed:
Though now, alas! I find I was deceived.
Queen. Then, sir, you should your fate, not me upbraid.
Don Car. I will not say you've broke the vows you
Only implore you would not quite forget [made;

The wretch you've oft seen dying at your feet;
And now no other favour begs to have,
Than such kind pity as becomes your slave.
For 'midst your highest joys, without a crime,
At least you now and then may think of him.

Queen. If e'er you loved me, you would this forbear;
It is a language which I dare not hear.
My heart and faith become your father's right,
All other passions I must now forget.

Don Car. Can then a crown and majesty dispense
Upon your heart such mighty influence,
That I must be for ever banished thence?
Had I been raised to all the heights of power,
In triumph crowned the world's great emperor,
Of all its riches, all its state possessed,
Yet you should still have governed in my breast.

Queen. In vain on her you obligations lay,
Who wants not will, but power to repay.

Hen. Yet had you Henrietta's heart, you would
At least strive to afford him all you could. [*Aside.*

Don Car. Oh! say not you want power; you may with one
Kind look pay doubly all I've undergone.
And knew you but the innocence I bear,
How pure, how spotless all my wishes are,
You would not scruple to supply my want,
When all I ask you may so safely grant.

Queen. I know not what to grant; too well I find
That still at least I cannot be unkind.

Don Car. Afford me then that little which I crave.

Queen. You shall not want what I may let you have. [*Gives her hand, sighing.*

Don Car. Like one
That sees a heap of gems before him cast,
Thence to choose any that may please him best;
From the rich treasure whilst I choice should make,

Dazzled with all, I know not where to take.
I would be rich—

Queen. Nay, you too far encroach;
I fear I have already given too much. [*Turns from him.*

Don Car. Oh, take not back again the appearing bliss:
How difficult's the path to happiness!
Whilst up the precipice we climb with pain,
One little slip throws us quite down again.
Stay, madam, though you nothing more can give
Than just enough to keep a wretch alive,
At least remember how I've loved—

Queen. I will.

Don Car. That was so kind, that I must beg more still;
Let me love on: it is a very poor
And easy grant, yet I'll request no more.

Queen. Do you believe that you can love retain,
And not expect to be beloved again?

Don Car. Yes, I will love, and think I'm happy too,
So long as I can find that you are so;
All my disquiets banish from my breast;
I will endeavour to do so at least. [*Sighing deeply.*
Or, if I can't my miseries outwear,
They never more shall come to offend your ear.

Queen. Love then, brave prince, whilst I'll thy love admire;

[*Gives her hand, which* Don CARLOS *during all this speech kisses eagerly.*

Yet keep the flame so pure, such chaste desire,
That without spot hereafter we above
May meet, when we shall come all soul, all love.
Till when—Oh! whither am I run astray?
I grow too weak, and must no longer stay:
For should I, the soft charm so strong would grow,
I find that I shall want the power to go.

[*Exeunt* QUEEN *and* HENRIETTA.

Don Car. Oh, sweet—
If such transport be in a taste so small,

How blest must he be that possesses all!
Where am I, Posa? Where's the queen?
[*Standing amazed.*

M. of Posa. My lord,
A while some respite to your heart afford:
The queen's retired—

Don Car. Retired! And did she then
Just show me Heaven, to shut it in again?
This little ease augments my pain the more;
For now I'm more impatient than before,
And have discovered riches make me mad.

M. of Posa. But since those treasures are not to be had,
You should correct desires that drive you on
Beyond that duty which becomes a son.
No longer let the tyrant love invade;
The brave may by themselves be happy made.
You to your father now must all resign.

Don Car. But ere he robbed me of her, she was mine.
To be my friend is all thou hast to do,
For half my miseries thou canst not know.
Make myself happy! Bid the damned do so;
Who in sad flames must be for ever tossed,
Yet still in view of the loved Heaven they've lost.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

Enter Don JOHN of Austria.

DON JOHN. How vainly would dull moralists impose
Limits on love, whose nature brooks no laws?
Love is a god, and like a god should be
Inconstant, with unbounded liberty,
Rove as he list—
I find it; for even now I've had a feast,
Of which a god might covet for a taste.
Methinks I yet
See with what soft devotion in her eyes
The tender lamb came to the sacrifice.
Oh, how her charms surprised me as I lay!
Like too near sweets they took my sense away;
And I even lost the power to reach at joy.
But those cross witchcrafts soon unravelled were,
And I was lulled in trances sweeter far:
As anchored vessels in calm harbours ride,
Rocked on the swellings of the floating tide.
How wretched's then the man, who though alone
He thinks he's blest, yet, as confined to one,
Is but at best a prisoner on a throne?

Enter the KING *attended,* Marquis of POSA, *and* RUY-GOMEZ.

King. Ye mighty powers, whose substitutes we are,
On whom you've lain of earth the rule and care,
Why all our toils do you reward with ill,
And to those weighty cares add greater still?
Oh, how could I your deities enrage,
That blessed my youth, thus to afflict my age?
A queen and a son's incest! dismal thought!

Don John. What is't so soon his majesty has brought
From the soft arms of his young bride? [*To* RUY-GOMEZ.

King. Ay, true!
Is she not, Austria, young and charming too?
Dost thou not think her to a wonder fair?
Tell me!

Don John. By Heaven, more bright than planets are:
Her beauty's force might even their power out-do.

King. Nay, she's as false, and as unconstant too.
O Austria, that a form so outward bright
Should be within all dark and ugly night!
For she, to whom I'd dedicated all
My love, that dearest jewel of my soul,
Takes from its shrine the precious relic down,
To adorn a little idol of her own,—
My son! that rebel both to Heaven and me!
Oh, the distracting throes of jealousy!
But as a drowning wretch, just like to sink,
Seeing him that threw him in upon the brink,
At the third plunge lays hold upon his foe,
And tugs him down into destruction too;
So thou, from whom these miseries I've known,
Shalt bear me out again, or with me drown.
[*Seizes roughly* on RUY-GOMEZ.

Ruy-Gom. My loyalty will teach me how to wait
All the successes of my sovereign's fate.
What is't, great sir, you would command me?

King. How!
What is't?—I know not what I'd have thee do:
Study revenge for me, 'tis that I want.
Don John. Alas! what frenzy does your temper haunt?
Revenge! on whom?
King. On my false queen and son.
Ruy-Gom. On them! good Heaven! what is't that they have done?
Oh, had my tongue been cursed, ere it had bred
This jealousy! [*Half aside.*
King. Then cancel what thou'st said.
Didst thou not tell me that thou saw'st him stand
Printing soft vows and kisses on her hand,
Whilst in requital she such glances gave,
Would quicken a dead lover in his grave?
Ruy-Gom. I did; and what less could the queen allow
To him than you to every vassal show?
The affording him that little from love's store
Implied that she for you reserved much more.
King. Oh, doubtless, she must have a wondrous store
Of love, that sells it at a rate so poor.
Now thou'dst rebate[1] my passion with advice;
And, when thou shouldst be active, wouldst be wise.
No, lead me where I may their incest see—
Do, or by Heaven—do, and I'll worship thee!
Oh, how my passions drive me to and fro!
Under their heavy weight I yield and bow.
But I'll re-gather yet my strength, and stand
Brandishing all my thunder in my hand.
M. of Posa. And may it be sent forth, and where it goes
Light fatally and heavy on your foes!
But let your loyal son and consort bear
No ill, since they of any guiltless are.
Here with my sword defiance I proclaim
To that bold traitor that dares wrong their fame.
Don John. I too dare with my life their cause make good.

[1] Make blunt.

King. Sure well their innocence you've understood,
That you so prodigal are of your blood.
Or wouldst thou speak me comfort? I would find
'Mongst all my counsellors at least one kind.
Yet any thing like that I must not hear;
For so my wrongs I should too tamely bear,
And weakly grow my own mean flatterer.
Posa, withdraw—[*Exit* Marquis of POSA.]—My lords,
all this you've heard.

Ruy-Gom. Yes, I observed it, sir, with strict regard:
The young lord's friendship was too great to hide.

King. Is he then so to my false son allied?
I am environed every way, and all
My fate's unhappy engines plot my fall.
Like Cæsar in the senate, thus I stand,
Whilst ruin threatened him on every hand.
From each side he had warning he must die;
Yet still he braved his fate, and so will I.
To strive for ease would but add more to pain:
As streams that beat against their banks in vain,
Retreating, swell into a flood again.
No, I'll do things the world shall quake to hear;
My just revenge so true a stamp shall bear,
As henceforth Heaven itself shall emulate,
And copy all its vengeance out by that.
All but Ruy-Gomez I must have withdrawn,
I've something to discourse with him alone.
[*Exeunt* Don JOHN *and* Attendants.
Now, Gomez, on thy truth depends thy fate;
Thou'st wrought my sense of wrong to such a height,
Within my breast it will no longer stay,
But grows each minute till it force its way.
I would not find myself at last deceived.

Ruy-Gom. Nor would I 'gainst your reason be believed.
Think, sir, your jealousy to be but fear
Of losing treasures which you hold so dear.

Your queen and son may yet be innocent:
I know but what they did, not what they meant.
King. Meant! what should looks, and sighs, and pressings mean?
No, no; I need not hear it o'er again.
No repetitions—something must be done.
Now there's no ill I know that I would shun.
I'll fly, till them I've in their incest found,
Full charged with rage, and with my vengeance hot,
Like a grenado from a cannon shot,
Which lights at last upon the enemy's ground,
Then, breaking, deals destruction all around. [*Exit.*

Ruy-Gom. So, now his jealousy is at the top,
Each little blast will serve to keep it up.
But stay; there's something I've omitted yet;—
Posa's my enemy; and true, he's great.
Alas! I'm armed 'gainst all that he can do;
For my snare's large enough to hold him too:
Yet I'll disguise that purpose for a while;
But when he with the rest is caught i' the toil,
I'll boldly out, and wanton in the spoil.

Re-enter Marquis of POSA.

M. of Posa. My lord Ruy-Gomez! and the king not here!
You, who so eminent a favourite are
In a king's eye, should ne'er be absent thence.
Ruy-Gom. No, sir, 'tis you that by a rising prince
Are cherished, and so tread a safer way,
Rich in that bliss the world waits to enjoy.
M. of Posa. Since what may bless the world we ought to prize,
I wish there were no public enemies;
No lurking serpents poison to dispense,
Nor wolves to prey on noble innocence;
No flatterers, that with royal goodness sport,
Those stinking weeds that overrun a court.
Ruy-Gom. Nay, if good wishes anything could do,
I have as earnest wishes, sir, as you:

That though perhaps our king enjoys the best
Of power, yet may he still be doubly blest.
May he— [there;

M. of Posa. Nay, Gomez, you shall ne'er outdo me
Since for great Philip's good I would you were,
If possible, more honest than you are.

Ruy-Gom. Why, Posa; what defect can you discern?

M. of Posa. Nay, half your mysteries I'm yet to learn
Though this I'll boldly justify to all,—
That you contrive a generous prince's fall.
[RUY-GOMEZ *smiles.*
Nay, think not by your smiles and careless port
To laugh it off; I come not here to sport;
I do not, sir.

Ruy-Gom. Young lord, what meaning has
This heat?

M. of Posa. To let you see I know you're base.

Ruy-Gom. Nay, then, I pardon ask that I did smile:
By Heaven, I thought you'd jested all this while.
Base!

M. of Posa. Yes, more base than impotent or old.
All virtue in thee, like thy blood, runs cold:
Thy rotten putrid carcass is less full
Of rancour and contagion than thy soul.
Even now before the king I saw it plain;
But duty in that presence awed me then;
Yet there I dared thy treason with my sword:
But still
Thy villany talked all; courage had not a word.
True, thou art old; yet, if thou hast a friend,
To whom thy curs'd cause thou darest commend;
'Gainst him in public I'll the innocence
Maintain of the fair queen and injured prince.

Ruy-Gom. Farewell, bold champion!
Learn better how your passions to disguise;
Appear less choleric, and be more wise. [*Exit.*

M. of Posa. How frail is all the glory we design,

Whilst such as these have power to undermine!
Unhappy prince! who mightst have safely stood,
If thou hadst been less great, or not so good.
Why the vile monster's blood did I not shed,
And all the vengeance draw on my own head?
My honour so had had this just defence,—
That I preserved my patron and my prince.

Enter Don CARLOS *and the* QUEEN.

Brave Carlos—ha! he's here. O sir, take heed;
By an unlucky fate your love is led.
The king—the king your father's jealous grown;
Forgetting her, his queen, or you, his son,
Calls all his vengeance up against you both.

Don Car. Has then the false Ruy-Gomez broke his oath,
And, after all, my innocence betrayed?

M. of Posa. Yes, all his subtlest snares are for you laid.
The king within this minute will be here,
And you are ruined, if but seen with her.
Retire, my lord—

Queen. How! is he jealous grown?
I thought my virtue he had better known.
His unjust doubts have soon found out the way
To make their entry on our marriage day;
For yet he has not known with me a night.
Perhaps his tyranny is his delight;
And to such height his cruelty is grown,
He'd exercise it on his queen and son.
But since, my lord, this time we must obey
Our interest, I beg you would not stay:
Not seeing you, he may to me be just.

Don Car. Should I then leave you, madam?

Queen. Yes, you must.

Don Car. Not then when storms against your virtue rise.
No; since to lose you wretched Carlos dies,
He'll have the honour of it, in your cause.
This is the noblest thing that Fate could do;

She thus abates the rigour of her laws,
Since 'tis some pleasure but to die for you.
Queen. Talk not of death, for that even cowards dare,
When their base fears compel them to despair:
Hope's the far nobler passion of the mind;
Fortune's a mistress that's with caution kind;
Knows that the constant merit her alone,
They who, though she seem froward, yet court on.
Don Car. To wretched minds thus still some comfort gleams,
And angels ease our griefs, though but with dreams.
I have too oft already been deceived,
And the cheat's grown too plain to be believed,
You, madam, bid me go.
[*Looking earnestly at the* QUEEN.
Queen. You must.
M. of Posa. You shall.
Alas! I love you, would not see you fall;
And yet may find some way to evade it all.
Don Car. Thou, Posa, ever wert my truest friend;
I almost wish thou wert not now so kind.
Thou of a thing that's lost tak'st too much care;
And you, fair angel, too indulgent are. [*To the* QUEEN.
Great my despair; but still my love is higher.
Well—in obedience to you I'll retire;
Though during all the storm I will be nigh,
Where, if I see the danger grow too high,
To save you, madam, I'll come forth and die. [*Exit.*

Re-enter KING *and* RUY-GOMEZ.

King. Who would have guessed that this had ever been? [*Seeing the* Marquis of POSA *and the* QUEEN
Distraction! where shall my revenge begin?
Why, he's the very bawd to all their sin;
And to disguise it puts on friendship's mask:
But his despatch, Ruy-Gomez, is thy task.
With him pretend some private conference,

And under that disguise seduce him hence;
Then in some place fit for the deed impart
The business, by a poniard to his heart.
Ruy-Gomez. 'Tis done—
King. So, madam! [*Steps to the* QUEEN.
Queen. By the fury in your eyes,
I understand you're come to tyrannize.
I hear you are already jealous grown,
And dare suspect my virtue with your son.
King. O womankind! thy mysteries who can scan,
Too deep for easy, weak, believing man?
Hold, let me look: indeed you're wondrous fair;
So, on the outside, Sodom's apples were:
And yet within, when opened to the view,
Not half so dangerous or so foul as you.
Queen. Unhappy, wretched woman that I am!
And you unworthy of a husband's name!
Do you not blush?
King. Yes, madam, for your shame.
Blush, too, my judgment e'er should prove so faint,
To let me choose a devil for a saint.
When first I saw and loved that tempting eye,
The fiend within the flame I did not spy;
But still ran on, and cherished my desires,
For heavenly beams mistook infernal fires;
Such raging fires as you have since thought fit
Alone my son, my son's hot youth should meet.
O vengeance, vengeance!
Queen. Poor ungenerous king!
How mean's the soul from which such thoughts must spring!
Was it for this I did so late submit
To let you whine and languish at my feet;
When with false oaths you did my heart beguile
And proffered all your empire for a smile?
Then, then my freedom 'twas I did resign,
Though you still swore you would preserve it mine.

And still it shall be so, for from this hour
I vow to hate, and never see you more.
Nay, frown not, Philip, for you soon shall know
I can resent and rage as well as you.

King. By hell! her pride's as raging as her lust.
A guard there! seize the queen! [*Enter* Guard.

Re-enter Don CARLOS; *he intercepts the* Guards.

Don Car. Hold, sir, be just.
First look on me, whom once you called your son,
A title I was always proud to own.

King. Good Heaven! to merit this what have I done,
That he too dares before my sight appear?

Don Car. Why, sir, where is the cause that I should
Bold in my innocence, I come to know [fear?
The reason why you use this princess so.

King. Sure I shall find some way to raise this siege:
He talks as if 'twere for his privilege.
Foul ravisher of all my honour, hence!
But stay! Guards, with the queen secure the prince.
Wherefore in my revenge should I be slow?
Now in my reach, I'll dash them at a blow.

Re-enter Don JOHN of Austria, *with the* Duchess of EBOLI, HENRIETTA, *and* GARCIA.

Don John. I come, great sir, with wonder here, to see
Your rage grow up to this extremity
Against your beauteous queen, and loyal son;
What is't that they to merit chains have done?
Or is't your own wild jealousy alone?

King. O Austria, thy vain inquiry cease,
If thou hast any value for thy peace.
My mighty wrongs so loud an accent bear,
'Twould make thee miserable but to hear.

Don Car. Father,—if I may dare to call you so,
Since now I doubt if I'm your son or no,—
As you have sealed my doom, I may complain.

King. Will then that monster dare to speak again?

Don Car. Yes, dying men should not their thoughts disguise;
And, since you take such joy in cruelties,
Ere of my death the new delight begin,
Be pleased to hear how cruel you have been.
Time was that we were smiled on by our fate,
You not unjust, nor I unfortunate:
Then, then I was your son, and you were glad
To hear my early praise was talked abroad:
Then love's dear sweets you to me would display;
Told me where this rich, beauteous treasure lay,
And how to gain't instructed me the way.
I came, and saw, and loved, and blessed you for't.
But then when love had sealed her to my heart,
You violently tore her from my side:
And, 'cause my bleeding wound I could not hide,
But still some pleasure to behold her took,
You now will have my life but for a look;
Wholly forgetting all the pains I bore,
Your heart with envious jealousy boils o'er,
'Cause I can love no less, and you no more.

Hen. Alas! how can you hear his soft complaint,
And not your hardened, stubborn heart relent?
Turn, sir; survey that comely, awful man,
And to my prayers be cruel if you can.

King. Away, deluder! who taught thee to sue?

D. of Eboli. Loving the queen, what is't she less can do,
Than lend her aid against the dreadful storm?

King. Why, can the devil dwell too in that form?
This is their little engine by the bye,
A scout to watch and tell when danger's nigh.
Come, pretty sinner, thou'lt inform me all,
How, where, and when; nay, do not fear—you shall.

Hen. Ah, sir, unkind! [*Kneels.*

King. Now hold thy siren's tongue:
Who would have thought there was a witch so young?

Don John. Can you to suing beauty stop your ears?

[*Raises up* HENRIETTA *and makes his address to her.*

Heaven lays its thunder by, and gladly hears,
When angels are become petitioners.

D. of Eboli. Ha! what makes Austria so officious
That glance seems as it sent his heart to her. [there?
[*Aside to* GARCIA.

Don Car. A banquet then of blood since you design,
Yet you may satisfy yourself with mine.
I love the queen, I have confessed, 'tis true:
Proud too to think I love her more than you;
Though she, by Heaven, is clear;—but I indeed
Have been unjust, and do deserve to bleed.
There were no lawless thoughts that I did want,
Which love had power to ask, or beauty grant;
Though I ne'er yet found hopes to raise them on,
For she did still preserve her honour's throne,
And dash the bold aspiring devils down.
If to her cause you do not credit give,
Fondly against your happiness you'll strive;
As some lose Heaven, because they won't believe.

Queen. Whilst, prince, my preservation you design,
Blot not your virtue to add more to mine.
The clearness of my truth I'd not have shown
By any other light besides its own.—
No, sir, he through despair all this has said,
And owns offences which he never made.
Why should you think that I would do you wrong?
Must I needs be unchaste because I'm young?

King. Unconstant wavering heart, why heavest thou so?
I shiver all, and know not what I do.
I who ere now have armies led to fight,
Thought war a sport, and danger a delight,
Whole winter nights stood under Heaven's wide roof,
Daring my foes, now am not beauty-proof.
Oh, turn away those basilisks, thy eyes;
The infection's fatal, and who sees them dies.
[*Going away.*

Queen. Oh, do not fly me; I have no design
Upon your life, for you may yet save mine. [*Kneels.*
Or if at last I must my breath submit,
Here take it, 'tis an offering at your feet:
Will you not look on me, my dearest lord?
King. Why? wouldst thou live?
Queen. Yes, if you'll say the word.
Don Car. O Heaven! how coldly and unmoved he sees
A praying beauty prostrate on her knees!
Rise, madam— [*Steps to take her up.*
King. Bold encroacher, touch her not:
Into my breast her glances thick are shot.
Not true!—Stay, let me see—by Heaven, thou art—
[*Looks earnestly on her.*
A false vile woman—O my foolish heart!
I give thee life: but from this time refrain,
And never come into my sight again:
Be banished ever.
Queen. This you must not do,
At least till I've convinced you I am true.
Grant me but so much time; and, when that's done,
If you think fit, for ever I'll be gone.
King. I've all this while been angry, but in vain:
She heats me first, then strokes me tame again.
Oh, wert thou true, how happy should I be!
Think'st thou that I have joy to part with thee?
No, all my kingdom for the bliss I'd give—
Nay, though it were not so—but to believe.
Come, for I can't avoid it, cheat me quite!
Queen. I would not, sir, deceive you if I might.
But if you'll take my oaths, by all above,
'Tis you, and only you, that I will love.
King. Thus as a mariner that sails along,
With pleasure hears the enticing siren's song,
Unable quite his strong desires to bound,
Boldly leaps in, though certain to be drowned,—

Come to my bosom then, make no delay;
[*Takes her in his arms.*
My rage is hushed, and I have room for joy.
Queen. Again you'll think that I unjust will prove.
King. No, thou art all o'er truth, and I all love.
Oh that we might for ever thus remain
In folded arms, and never part again!
Queen. Command me anything, and try your power.
King. Then from this minute ne'er see Carlos more.—
Thou slave, that darest do ill with such a port,
For ever here I banish thee my court.
Within some cloister lead a private life,
That I may love and rule without this strife.
Here, Eboli, receive her to thy charge:
The treasure's precious, and the trust is large.
Whilst I, retiring hence, myself make fit
To wait for joys which are too fierce to meet. [*Exit.*
Don Car. My exile from his presence I can bear
With pleasure: but, no more to look on her!
Oh, 'tis a dreadful curse I cannot bear.
No, madam, all his power shall nothing do:
I'll stay and take my banishment from you.
Do you command me, see how far I'll fly.
Queen. Will Carlos be at last my enemy?
Consider, this submission I have shown,
More to preserve your safety than my own.
Ungratefully you needless ways devise,
To lose a life which I so dearly prize.
Don Car. So now her fortune's made, and I am left
Alone, a naked wanderer to shift. [*Aside.*
Madam, you might have spared the cruelty;
[*To the* QUEEN.
Blessed with your sight, I was prepared to die.
But now to lose it drives me to despair,
Making me wish to die, and yet not dare.
Well, to some solitary shore I'll roam,

And never more into your presence come,
Since I already find I'm troublesome. [*Going.*
Queen. Stay, sir, yet stay:—you shall not leave me so.
Don Car. Ha!
Queen. I must talk with you before you go.
O Carlos, how unhappy is our state!
How foul a game was played us by our fate!
Who promised fair when we did first begin,
Till envying to see us like to win,
Straight fell to cheat, and threw the false lot in.
My vows to you I now remember all.
Don Car. O madam, I can hear no more. [*Kneels.*
Queen. You shall;— [*Kneels too.*
For I can't choose but let you know that I,
If you'll resolve on't, yet will with you die.
Don Car. Sure nobler gallantry was never known!
Good Heaven! this blessing is too much for one:
No, 'tis enough for me to die alone.
My father, all my foes, I now forgive.
Queen. Nay, sir, by all our loves I charge you live.
But to what country wheresoe'er you go,
Forget not me, for I'll remember you.
Don Car. Shall I such virtue and such charms for-
No, never! [get?
Queen. Oh that we had never met,
But in our distant climates still been free!
I might have heard of you, and you of me:
So towards happiness more safely moved,
And never been thus wretched, yet have loved.
What makes you look so wildly? Why d'ye start?
Don Car. A faint cold damp is thickening round my
Queen. What shall we do? [heart.
Don Car. Do anything but part;
Or stay so long till my poor soul expires
In view of all the glory it admires.
D. of Eboli. In such a lover how might I be blest!
Oh! were I of that noble heart possessed,

How soft, how easy would I make his bands! [*Aside.*
But, madam, you forget the king's commands:
[*To the* QUEEN.
Longer to stay, your dangers will renew.
Don Car. Ah, princess! lovers' pains you never knew;
Or what it is to part, as we must do.
Part too for ever!
After one minute never more to stand
Fixed on those eyes, or pressing this soft hand!
'Twere but enough to feed one, and not starve,
Yet that is more than I did e'er deserve;
Though fate to us is niggardly and poor,
That from eternity can't spare one hour.
Queen. If it were had, that hour would soon be gone,
And we should wish to draw another on.
No, rigorous necessity has made
Us both his slaves, and now will be obeyed.
Come, let us try the parting blow to bear.
Adieu! [*Looking at each other.*
Don Car. Farewell! I'm fixed and rooted here;
I cannot stir—
Queen. Shall I the way then show?
Now hold, my heart—
[*Goes to the door, stops, and turns back again.*
Nay, sir, why don't you go?
Don Car. Why do you stay?
Queen. I won't—
Don. Car. You shall a while. [*Kneels.*
With one look more my miseries beguile,
That may support my heart till you are gone!
Queen. O Eboli! thy help, or I'm undone.
[*Takes hold on her.*
Here, take it then, and with it too my life!
[*Leans into her arms.*
Don Car. My courage with my tortures is at strife,
Since my griefs cowards are, and dare not kill,
I'll try to vanquish and out-toil the ill.

Well, madam, now I'm something hardier grown:
Since I at last perceive you must be gone,
To venture the encounter I'll be bold;
[*Leads her to the door.*
For certainly my heart will so long hold.
Farewell! be happy as you're fair and true.

Queen. And all Heaven's kindest angels wait on you! [*Exeunt* QUEEN, Duchess of EBOLI, HENRIETTA, *and* GARCIA.

Don Car. Thus long I've wandered in love's crooked way,
By hope's deluded meteor led astray;
For, ere I've half the dangerous desert crossed,
The glimmering light's gone out, and I am lost.
[*Exit.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*The Ante-Chamber to the* QUEEN'S *Apartment.*

Enter Don CARLOS *and* Marquis of POSA.

DON CAR. The next is the apartment of the queen:
In vain I try, I must not venture in.
[*Goes toward the door but returns.*
Thus is it with the souls of murdered men,
Who to their bodies would again repair;
But, finding that they cannot enter there,
Mourning and groaning wander in the air.
Robbed of my love, and as unjustly thrown
From all those hopes that promised me a crown,
My heart, with the dishonours to me done,
Is poisoned, swells too mighty for my breast;
But it will break, and I shall be at rest.
No; dull despair this soul shall never load:
Though patience be the virtue of a god,
Gods never feel the ills that govern here,
Or are above the injuries we bear.
"Father" and "king"; both names bear mighty sense:
Yet sure there's something too in "son" and "prince.
I was born high, and will not fall less great;
Since triumph crowned my birth, I'll have my fate

As glorious and majestic too as that.
To Flanders, Posa, straight my letters send;
Tell them the injured Carlos is their friend;
And that to head their forces I design;
So vindicate their cause, if they dare mine.[1]

M. of Posa. To the rebels?

Don Car. No, they're friends; their cause is just;
Or, when I make it mine, at least it must.
Let the common rout like beasts love to be dull,
Whilst sordidly they live at ease and full,
Senseless what honour or ambition means,
And ignorantly drag their load of chains.
I am a prince, have had a crown in view,
And cannot brook to lose the prospect now.
If thou'rt my friend, do not my will delay.

M. of Posa. I'll do't. [*Exit.*

Enter Duchess of EBOLI.

D. of Eboli. My lord.

Don Car. Who calls me?

D. of Eboli. You must stay.

Don Car. What news of fresh affliction can you bear?

D. of Eboli. Suppose it were the queen; you'd stay for her?

Don Car. For her? yes, stay an age, for ever stay;
Stay even till time itself should pass away;
Fix here a statue never to remove,
An everlasting monument of love.
Though, may a thing so wretched as I am
But the least place in her remembrance claim?

D. of Eboli. Yes, if you dare believe me, sir, you do;
We both can talk of nothing else but you:

[1] Don Carlos actually engaged in intrigues with the principals of the revolution which broke out in the Low Countries during the tyrannical reign of Philip II., and ended in the establishment of the Dutch republic.—*Thornton.*

Whilst from the theme even emulation springs,
Each striving who shall say the kindest things.
Don Car. But from that charity I poorly live,
Which only pities, and can nothing give.
D. of Eboli. Nothing! Propose what 'tis you claim,
For aught you know, may be security. [and I,
Don Car. No, madam, what's my due none e'er can pay;
There stands that angel, Honour, in the way,
Watching his charge with never-sleeping eyes,
And stops my entrance into paradise.
D. of Eboli. What paradise? What pleasures can
Which are not in my power to bestow? [you know,
Don Car. Love, love, and all those eager, melting charms
The queen must yield when in my father's arms.
That queen, so excellently, richly fair,
Jove, could he come again a lover here,
Would court mortality to die for her.
O madam, take not pleasure to renew
Those pains, which if you felt, you would not do.
D. of Eboli. Unkindly urged: think you no sense I have
Of what you feel? Now you may take your leave.
Something I had to say; but let it die.
Don Car. Why, madam, who has injured you? Not I.
D. of Eboli. Nay, sir, your presence I would not
Alas! you do not hear that I complain. [detain:
Though, could you half of my misfortunes see,
Methinks you should incline to pity me.
Don Car. I cannot guess what mournful tale you'd
But I am certain you prepare me well. [tell;
Speak, madam.
D. of Eboli. Say I loved, and with a flame
Which even melts my tender heart to name;
Loved too a man, I will not say ingrate,

Because he's far above my birth or fate;
Yet so far he at least does cruel prove,
He prosecutes a dead and hopeless love,
Starves on a barren rock, and won't be blest,
Though I invite him kindly to a feast.

Don Car. What stupid animal could senseless lie,
Quickened by beams from that illustrious eye?

D. of Eboli. Nay, to increase your wonder, you shall know
That I, alas! am forced to tell him too,
Till even I blush, as now I tell it you.

Don Car. You neither shall have cause of shame or fear,
Whose secrets safe within my bosom are.

D. of Eboli. Then farther I the riddle may explain:
Survey that face, and blame me if you can.
[*Shows him his own picture.*

Don Car. Distraction of my eyes! what have they seen?
'Tis my own picture which I sent the queen,
When to her fame I paid devotion first,
Expecting bliss, but lost it: I am cursed,
Cursed too in thee, who from my saint darest steal
The only relic left her of my zeal,
And with the sacrilege attempt my heart:
Wert thou more charming than thou think'st thou art,
Almighty love preserves the fort for her,
And bids defiance to thy entrance there.

D. of Eboli. Neglected! Scorned by father and by son!
What a malicious course my stars have run!
But since I meet with such unlucky fate
In love, I'll try how I can thrive in hate:
My own dull husband may assist in that.
To his revenge I'll give him fresh alarms,
And with the gray old wizard muster charms.
I have't; thanks, thanks, revenge! Prince, 'tis thy bane. [*Aside.*
Can you forgive me, sir? I hope you can. [*Mildly.*

I'll try to recompense the wrongs I've done,
And better finish what is ill begun.

Don Car. Madam, you at so strange a rate proceed,
I shall begin to think you loved indeed.

D. of Eboli. No matter: be but to my honour true,
As you shall ever find I'll be to you.
The queen's my charge, and you may, on that score,
Presume that you shall see her yet once more.
I'll lead you to those so-much worshipped charms,
And yield you to my happy rival's arms.

Don Car. In what a mighty sum shall I be bound!
I did not think such virtue could be found.
Thou mistress of all best perfections, stay:
Fain I in gratitude would something say,
But am too far in debt for thanks to pay.

Enter Don JOHN of Austria.

Don John. Where is that prince, he whose afflictions speak
So loud, as all hearts but his own might break?

Don Car. My lord, what fate has left me, I am here,
Mere man, of all my comfort stripped and bare.
Once, like a vine, I flourished and was young,
Rich in my ripening hopes that spoke me strong:
But now a dry and withered stock am grown,
And all my clusters and my branches gone.

Don John. Amongst those numbers which your wrongs deplore,
Than me there's none that can resent them more.
I feel a generous grudging in my breast,
To see such honour and such hopes oppressed.
The king your father is my brother, true;
But I see more that's like myself in you.
Free-born I am, and not on him depend,
Obliged to none, but whom I call my friend.
And if that title you think fit to bear,
Accept the confirmation of it here. [*Embraces him.*

Don Car. From you, to whom I'm by such kind-
The secrets of my soul I will not hide. [ness tied,
This generous princess has her promise given,
I once more shall be brought in sight of Heaven;
To the fair queen my last devotion pay;
And then for Flanders I intend my way,
Where to the insulting rebels I'll give law,
To keep myself from wrongs, and them in awe.

Don John. Prosperity to the design, 'tis good;
Both worthy of your honour and your blood.

Don Car. My lord, your spreading glories flourish
Above the reach or shock of destiny: [high,
Mine, early nipped, like buds untimely die.

Enter Officer *of the Guard.*

Offi. My lord, I grieve to tell what you must hear;
They are unwelcome orders which I bear,
Which are, to guard you as a prisoner.

Don Car. A prisoner! what new game of fate's
Henceforth be ever cursed the name of son, [begun?
Since I must be a slave, because I'm one.
Duty! to whom? He's not my father: no.
Back with your orders to the tyrant go;
Tell him his fury drives too much one way;
I'm weary on't, and can no more obey.

Don John. If asked by whose commands you did
Your orders, tell my brother 'twas by mine. [decline
[*Exit* Officer.

Don Car. Now, were I certain it would sink me quite,
I'd see the queen once more, though but in spite;
Though he with all his fury were in place,
I would caress and court her to his face.
Oh that I could this minute die! if so,
What he had lost he might too lately know,
Cursing himself to think what he has done:
For I was ever an obedient son;

With pleasure all his glories saw, when young,
Looked, and, with pride considering whence I sprung,
Joyfully under him and free I played,
Basked in his shine and wantoned in his shade—
But now,
Cancelling all whate'er he then conferred,
He thrusts me out among the common herd:
Nor quietly will there permit my stay,
But drives and hunts me like a beast of prey.
Affliction! O affliction! 'tis too great,
Nor have I ever learnt to suffer yet.
Though ruin at me from each side take aim,
And I stand thus encompassed round with flame,
Though the devouring fire approaches fast,
Yet will I try to plunge: if power waste,
I can at worst but sink, and burn at last. [*Exit.*

Don John. Go on, pursue thy fortune while 'tis hot:
I long for work where honour's to be got.
But, madam, to this prince you're wondrous kind.

D. of Eboli. You are not less to Henriet, I find.

Don John. Why, she's a beauty, tender, young, and fair.

D. of Eboli. I thought I might in charms have equalled her.
You told me once my beauty was not less.
Is this your faith? are these your promises?

Don John. You would seem jealous, but are crafty grown;
Tax me of falsehood to conceal your own.
Go, you're a woman—

D. of Eboli. Yes, I know I am:
And by my weakness do deserve that name,
When heart and honour I to you resigned.
Would I were not a woman, or less kind!

Don John. Think you your falsehood was not plainly seen,
When to your charge my brother gave the queen?
Too well I saw it; how did you dispense,

In looks, your pity to the afflicted prince!
Whilst I my duty paid the king, your time
You watched, and fixed your melting eyes on him;
Admired him—

D. of Eboli. Yes, sir, for his constancy—
But 'twas with pain, to think you false to me,
When to another's eye you homage paid,
And my true love wronged and neglected laid;
Wronged, too, so far as nothing can restore.

Don John. Nay, then, let's part, and think of love no more.
Farewell! [*Going.*

D. of Eboli. Farewell, if you're resolved to go:—
Inhuman Austria, can you leave me so?
Enough my soul is by your falsehood racked;
Add not to your inconstancy neglect.
Methinks you so far might have grateful proved,
Not to have quite forgotten that I loved.

Don John. If e'er you loved, 'tis you, not I forget;
For a remove 'tis here too deeply set,
Firm-rooted, and for ever must remain.
[*She turns away.*
Why thus unkind?

D. of Eboli. Why are you jealous then?
[*Turns to him.*

Don John. Come, let it be no more! I'm hushed and still.
Will you forgive?

D. of Eboli. How can you doubt my will?
I do.

Don John. Then send me not away unblest.

D. of Eboli. Till you return I will not think of rest.
Carlos will hither suddenly repair.
The next apartment's mine; I'll wait you there,
Farewell! [*She seems to weep.*

Don John. Oh, do not let me see a tear;
It quenches joy, and stifles appetite.

Like war's fierce god, upon my bliss I'd prey;
Who, from the furious toils of arms all day,
Returning home to love's fair queen at night,
Comes riotous and hot with full delight. [*Exit.*

D. of Eboli. He has reaped his joys, and now he would be free,
And to effect it puts on jealousy:
But I'm as much a libertine as he;
As fierce my will, as furious my desires;
Yet will I hold him; though enjoyment tires,
Though love and appetite be at the best,
He'll serve, as common meats fill up a feast,
And look like plenty, though we never taste.

Enter RUY-GOMEZ.

Old lord, I bring thee news will make thee young.

Ruy-Gom. Speak; there was always music in thy tongue.

D. of Eboli. Thy foes are tottering, and the day's thy own;
Give them but one lift now, and they go down.
Quickly to the king, and all his doubts renew;
Appear disturbed, as if you something knew
Too difficult and dangerous to relate,
Then bring him hither labouring with the weight.
I will take care that Carlos shall be here:
So for his jealous eyes a sight prepare,
Shall prove more fatal than Medusa's head,
And he more monster seem than she e'er made.
[*Exit.*

Enter KING, *attended.*

King. Still how this tyrant doubt torments my breast!
When shall I get the usurper dispossessed?
My thoughts, like birds when frighted from their rest,
Around the place where all was hushed before,
Flutter, and hardly settle any more—
[*Sees* RUY-GOMEZ.
Ha, Gomez! what art thou thus musing on?

Ruy-Gom. I'm thinking what it is to have a son;
What mighty cares and what tempestuous strife
Attend on an unhappy father's life;
How children blessings seem, but torments are;
When young, our folly; and when old, our fear.
King. Why dost thou bring these odd reflections here?
Thou enviest sure the quiet which I bear.
Ruy-Gom. No, sir, I joy in the ease which you possess,
And wish you never may have cause for less.
King. Have cause for less! Come nearer; thou art sad,
And look'st as thou wouldst tell me that I had.
Now, now, I feel it rising up again—
Speak quickly, where is Carlos? where the queen?
What, not a word? have my wrongs struck thee dumb?
Or art thou swollen and labouring with my doom,
Yet darest not let the fatal secret come?
Ruy-Gom. Heaven great infirmities to age allots:
I'm old, and have a thousand doting thoughts.
Seek not to know them, sir.
King. By Heaven! I must.
Ruy-Gom. Nay, I would not be by compulsion just.
King. Yet, if without it you refuse, you shall.
Ruy-Gom. Grant me then one request, I'll tell you all.
King. Name thy petition, and conclude it done.
Ruy-Gom. It is, that you would here forgive your
For all his past offences to this hour. [son
King. Thou'st almost asked a thing beyond my power;
But so much goodness in the request I find,
Spite of myself, I'll for thy sake be kind.
His pardon's sealed; the secret now declare.
Ruy-Gom. Alas! 'tis only that I saw him here.

King. Where? with the queen! Yes, yes, 'tis so,
Never were wrongs so great as I endure; [I'm sure;
So great that they are grown beyond complaint,
For half my patience might have made a saint.
O woman! monstrous woman!
Did I for this into my breast receive
The promising, repenting fugitive?
But, Gomez, I will throw her back again;
And thou shalt see me smile and tear her then.
I'll crush her heart, where all the poison lies,
Till, when the venom's out, the viper dies,

Ruy-Gom. They the best method of revenge pursue
Who so contrive that it may justice show;
Stay till their wrongs appear at such a head
That innocence may have no room to plead.
Your fury, sir, at least awhile delay;
I guess the prince may come again this way:
Here I'll withdraw, and watch his privacy.

King. And when he's fixed, be sure bring word to [me;
Till then I'll bridle vengeance, and retire,
Within my breast suppress this angry fire,
Till to my eyes my wrongs themselves display;
Then, like a falcon, gently cut my way,
And with my pounces seize the unwary prey. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Duchess of EBOLI.

D. of Eboli. I've overheard the business with de-
And find revenge will have a feast to-night. [light,
Though thy declining years are in their wane,
I can perceive there's youth still in thy brain.
Away! the queen is coming hither.
[*Exit* RUY-GOMEZ.

Enter QUEEN *with* Attendants, *and* HENRIETTA.

Queen. Now
To all felicity a long adieu.
Where are you, Eboli?

D. of Eboli. Madam, I'm here.

Queen. Oh, how fresh fears assault me everywhere!
I hear that Carlos is a prisoner made.
D. of Eboli. No, madam, he the orders disobeyed;
And boldly owns for Flanders he intends,
To head the rebels, whom he styles his friends:
But, ere he goes, by me does humbly sue
That he may take his last farewell of you.
Queen. Will he then force his destiny at last?
Hence quickly to him, Eboli, make haste:
Tell him, I beg his purpose he'd delay,
Or, if that can't his resolution stay,
Say I have sworn not to survive the hour
In which I hear that he has left this shore.
Tell him, I've gained his pardon of the king;
Tell him—to stay him—tell him anything—
D. of Eboli. One word from you his duty would restore;
And, though you promised ne'er to see him more,
Methinks you might upon so just a score.
But see, he's here.

Re-enter Don CARLOS.

Don Car. Run out of breath by fate,
And persecuted by a father's hate,
Wearied with all, I panting hither fly,
To lay myself down at your feet, and die.
[*Kneels, and kisses the* QUEEN'S ***hands.***
Queen. O too unhappy Carlos! yet unkind!
'Gainst you what harms have ever I designed,
That you should with such violence decree
Ungratefully at last to murder me?
Don Car. Pour all thy curses, Heaven, upon this head,
For I've the worst of vengeance merited,
That yet I impudently live to hear
Myself upbraided of a wrong to her! [***Rises.***
Say, has your honour been by me betrayed?

Or have I snares to entrap your virtue laid?
Tell me; if not, why do you then upbraid?
Queen. You will not know the afflictions which you give;
Was't not my last request that you would live?
I by our vows conjured it; but I see,
Forgetting them, unmindful too of me,
Regardless, your own ruin you design,
Though you are sure to purchase it with mine.
Don Car. I, as you bade me live, obeyed with pride,
Though it was harder far than to have died.
But loss of liberty my life disdains;
These limbs were never made to suffer chains.
My father should have singled out some crown,
And bidden me go conquer it for my own:
He should have seen what Carlos would have done.
But to prescribe my freedom, sink me low
To base confinement, where no comforts flow,
But black despair, that foul tormentor, lies,
With all my present load of miseries,
Was to my soul too violent a smart,
And roused the sleeping lion in my heart.
Queen. Yet then be kind; your angry father's rage
I know the least submission will assuage;
You're hot with youth, he's choleric with age.
To him, and put a true obedience on;
Be humble, and express yourself a son.
Carlos, I beg it of you: will you not?
Don Car. Methinks 'tis very hard, but yet I'll do't.
I must obey whatever you prefer,
Knowing you're all divine, and cannot err.
For, if my doom's unalterable, I shall
This way at least with less dishonour fall;
And princes less my tameness thus condemn,
When I for you shall suffer, though by him.
Queen. In my apartment farther we'll debate
Of this, and for a happy issue wait.

Your presence there he cannot disapprove,
When it shall speak your duty, and my love.
[*Exeunt* Don CARLOS, QUEEN, HENRIETTA, *and* Attendants.

Re-enter RUY-GOMEZ.

D. of Eboli. Now, Gomez, triumph! All is ripe; the toil
Has caught them, and fate saw it with a smile.
Thus far the work of destiny was mine;
But I'm content the masterpiece be thine.
Away to the king, prepare his soul for blood,—
A mystery thou well hast understood.
Whilst I go rest within a lover's arms, [*Aside.*
And to my Austria lay out all my charms. [*Exit.*

Ruy-Gom. Fate, open now thy book, and set them
I have already marked them for thy own. [down:

Re-enter KING, *and* Marquis of POSA *at a distance.*

My lord the king?

King. Gomez?

Ruy-Gom. The same.

King. Hast seen
The prince?

Ruy-Gom. I have.

King. Where is he?

Ruy-Gom. With the queen.

King. Now ye that dwell in everlasting flame,
And keep records of all ye mean to damn,
Show me, if 'mongst your precedents there e'er
Was seen a son like him, or wife like her.
Hark, Gomez! didst not hear the infernals groan?
Hush, hell, a little, and they are thy own!

M. of Posa. Who should these be? the king and Gomez, sure:
Methinks I wish that Carlos were secure;
For Flanders his despatches I've prepared.

King. Who's there? 'Tis Posa, pander to their lust. [*Drawing near to* POSA.
Now, Gomez, to his heart thy dagger thrust;
In the pursuit of vengeance drive it far;
Strike deep, and, if thou canst, wound Carlos there.
Ruy-Gom. I'll do't as close as happy lovers kiss:
May he strike mine, if of his heart I miss!
Thus, sir! [*Stabs* POSA.
M. of Posa. Ha, Gomez! villain! thou hast done
Thy worst: but yet I would not die alone:
Here, dog! [*Stabs at him.*
Ruy-Gom. So brisk! then take it once again.
[*As they are struggling, the despatches fall out of* POSA'S *bosom.*
'Twas only, sir, to put you out of pain.
[*Stabs him again, and* POSA *falls.*
M. of Posa. My lord the king—but life too far is gone—
I faint—be mindful of your queen and son. [*Dies.*
King. The slave in death repents, and warns me.
I shall be very mindful. What are these? [Yes,
[*Takes up the despatches.*
For Flanders! with the prince's signet sealed!
Here's villany has yet been unrevealed.
See, Gomez, practices against my crown;
[*Shows them him.*
Treason and lust have joined to pull me down.
Yet still I stand like a firm sturdy rock,
Whilst they but split themselves with their own
But I too long delay: give word I come. [shock.
Ruy-Gom. What, ho! within! The king is nigh; make room.
[RUY-GOMEZ *draws a curtain, and discovers* Don JOHN *and the* Duchess of EBOLI *embracing.*
King. Now let me, if I can, to fury add,
That when I thunder I may strike them dead.
[*Looking earnestly on them.*

Ha! Gomez! on this truth depends thy life.
Why, that's our brother Austria!
Ruy-Gom. And my wife!
Embracing close. Whilst I was busy grown
In others' ruins, here I've met my own.
Oh! had I perished ere 'twas understood! [brood.
King. This is the nest where lust and falsehood
Is it not admirable?

[*Exeunt* Don JOHN *and the* Duchess of EBOLI *embracing.*

Ruy-Gom. Oh, sir, yes!
Ten thousand devils tear the sorceress!
King. But they are gone, and my dishonour's near.

Re-enter Don CARLOS *and* QUEEN, *discoursing;* HENRIETTA *and* Attendants.

Look, my incestuous son and wife appear.
See, Gomez, how she languishes and dies.
'Sdeath! there are very pulses in her eyes.

[Don CARLOS *approaches the* KING.

Don Car. In peace, Heaven ever guard the king from harms;
In war, success and triumph crown his arms;
Till all the nations of the world shall be
Humble and prostrate at his feet, like me! [*Kneels.*
I hear your fury has my death designed;
Though I've deserved the worst, you may be kind:
Behold me as your poor unhappy son,
And do not spill that blood which is your own!
King. Yes, when my blood grows tainted, I ne'er [doubt
But for my health 'tis good to let it out:
But thine's a stranger, like thy soul, to me;
Or else be cursed thy mother's memory,
And doubly cursed be that unhappy night
In which I purchased torment with delight!
Don Car. Thus then I lay aside all rights of blood.

[*Rises boldly.*

My mother cursed! She was all just and good,
Tyrant! too good to stay with thee below,
And therefore's blest, and reigns above thee now.
Submission! which way got it entrance here?
King. Perhaps it came ere treason was aware.
Thy traitorous design's now come to light,
Too great and horrid to be hid in night.
See here my honour, and thy duty's stains!
[*Shows the despatches.*
I've paid your secretary for his pains;
He waits you there: to council with him go;
[*Shows* POSA'S *body.*
Ask what intelligence from Flanders now.
Don Car. My friend here slain, my faithful Posa 'tis.
Good Heaven! what have I done to merit this?
What temples sacked, what desolations made,
To pull down such a vengeance on my head?
This, villain, was thy work: what friend of thine
[*To* RUY-GOMEZ.
Did I e'er wrong, that thou shouldst murder mine?
But I'll take care it shall not want reward—[*Draws.*
King. Courage, my Gomez, since thy king's thy
Come, rebel, and thy villanies fulfil! [guard.
Don Car. No; though unjust, you are my father
still; [*Throws away his sword.*
And from that title must your safety own:
'Tis that which awes my hand, and not your crown.
'Tis true, all there contained I had designed:
To such a height your jealousy was grown,
It was the only way that I could find
To work your peace, and to procure my own.
King. Thinking my youth and vigour to decrease,
You'd ease me of my crown to give me peace.
Don Car. Alas! you fetch your misconstructions
The injuries to me, and wrongs to her, [far:
Were much too great for empire to repair.
When you forgot a father's love, and quite

Deprived me of a son's and prince's right,
Branded my honour, and pursued my life,
My duty long with nature was at strife.
Not that I feared my memory or name
Could suffer by the voice of common fame;
A thing I still esteemed beneath my pride:
For, though condemned by all the world beside,
Had you but thought me just, I could have died.
At last this only way I found, to fly
Your anger, and divert your jealousy:—
To go to Flanders, and be so removed
From all I ever honoured, ever loved;
There in your right hoping I might complete,
Spite of my wrongs, some action truly great;
Thus by my faith and sufferings to out-wear
Your hate, and shun that storm which threatened here.

Queen. And can this merit hate? He would forego
The joys and charms of courts to purchase you;
Banish himself, and stem the dangerous tide
Of lawless outrage and rebellious pride.

King. How evenly she pleads in his defence!
So blind is guilt when 'twould seem innocence.
She thinks her softness may my rage disarm.
No, sorceress, you're mistaken in your charm,
And, whilst you soothe, do but assist the storm!
Do, take full view of your tall able slave;
[QUEEN *looks on* Don CARLOS.
Look hard; it is the last you're like to have.

Don Car. My life or death are in your power to give.

King. Yes, and thou diest.

Don Car. Not till she give me leave:
She is the star that rules my destiny;
And, whilst her aspect's kind, I cannot die.

Queen. No, prince, for ever live, be ever blest.

King. Yes, I will send him to his eternal rest.
Oh! had I took the journey long ago,
I ne'er had known the pains that rack me now.

Queen. What pains? what racks? [*Approaching.*
King. Avoid, and touch me not!
I see thee foul, all one incestuous blot;
Thy broken vows are in thy guilty face.
Queen. Have I then in your pity left no place?
King. Oh! thus it was you drew me in before,
With promises you ne'er would see him more.
But now your subtlest wiles too weak are grown;
I've gotten freedom, and I'll keep my own.
Queen. May you be ever free! But can your mind
Conceive that any ill was here designed?
He hither came, only that he might show
Obedience, and be reconciled to you.
You saw his humble, dutiful address.
King. But you beforehand signed the happy peace.

Re-enter Duchess of EBOLI.

O princess, thank you for the care you take.
Tell me, how got this monster entrance? speak.
D. of Eboli. Heaven witness 'twas without my knowledge done.
Ruy-Gom. No, she had other business of her own. [*Aside.*
O blood and murder!
King. All are false: a guard!

Enter Guard.

Seize on that traitor! [*Pointing to* Don CARLOS.
Don Car. Welcome; I'm prepared.
Queen. Stay, sir, let me die too: I can obey.
King. No, thou shalt live. [*Seemingly kind.*] By Heaven, but not a day! [*Aside.*
I a revenge so exquisite have framed,
She unrepenting dies, and so she's damned.
Hen. If ever pity could your heart engage,
If e'er you hope for blessings on your age,
Incline your ears to a poor virgin's prayer!

King. I dare not venture thee, thou art too fair.
What wouldst thou say?
Hen. Destroy not in one man
More virtue than the world can boast again.
View him the eldest pledge of your first love,
Your virgin joys; that may some pity move—
King. No; for the wrongs I suffer weigh it down:
I'd now not spare his life to save my own.
Away! by thy soft tongue I'll not be caught.
Hen. By all that hopes can frame I beg: if not,
May you by some base hand unpitied die,
And childless mothers curse your memory!
By honour, love, by life—
King. Fond girl, away:
By Heaven, I'll kill thee else! Still darest thou stay?
Cannot death terrify thee?
Hen. No; for I,
If you refuse me, am resolved to die.
Don Car. Kind fair one, do not waste your sorrows
On me, too wretched, and not worth a tear. [here
There yet for you are mighty joys in store,
When I in dust am laid, and seen no more.—
O madam! [*To the* QUEEN.
Queen. O my Carlos! must you die
For me? no mercy in a father's eye?
Don Car. Hide, hide your tears, into my soul they [dart
A tenderness that misbecomes my heart:
For, since I must, I like a prince would fall,
And to my aid my manly spirits call.
Queen. You, like a man, as roughly as you will
May die, but let me be a woman still! [*Weeps.*
King. Thou'rt woman, a true copy of the first,
In whom the race of all mankind was cursed.
Your sex by beauty was to Heaven allied;
But your great lord, the devil, taught you pride.
He too an angel, till he durst rebel;
And you are, sure, the stars that with him fell.

Weep on! a stock of tears like vows you have,
And always ready when you would deceive.
Queen. Cruel! inhuman! O my heart! why should
I throw away a title that's so good,
On one a stranger to whate'er was so?
Alas, I'm torn, and know not what to do.
The just resentment of my wrong's so great,
My spirits sink beneath the heavy weight.
Tyrant, stand off! I hate thee, and will try
If I have scorn enough to make me die.
Don Car. Blest angel, stay! [*Takes her in his arms.*
Queen. Carlos, the sole embrace
You ever took, you have before his face.
Don Car. No wealthy monarch of the plenteous East,
In all the glories of his empire dressed,
Was ever half so rich, or half so blest.
But from such bliss how wretched is the fall!
They too like us must die, and leave it all.
King. All this before my face! what soul could bear't?
Go, force her from him! [Officer *approaches.*
Don Car. Slave, 'twill cost thy heart.
Thou'dst better meet a lion on his way,
And from his hungry jaws reprize the prey!
She's mistress of my soul, and to prepare
Myself for death, I must consult with her.
Ruy-Gom. Have pity! [*Ironically.*
King. Hence! how wretchedly he rules
That's served by cowards, and advised by fools!
Oh, torture!
Don Car. Rouse, my soul! consider now
That to thy blissful mansion thou must go.
But I so mighty joys have tasted here,
I hardly shall have sense of any there:
Oh, soft as blossoms, and yet sweeter far!
[*Leaning on her bosom.*

Sweeter than incense which to Heaven ascends,
Though 'tis presented there by angels' hands.
King. Still in his arms! Cowards, go tear her forth!
Don Car. You'll sooner from its centre shake the earth:
I'll hold her fast till my last hour is nigh;
Then I'll bequeath her to you when I die.
King. Cut off his hold! or any thing—
Don Car. Ay, come;
Here kill, and bear me hence into my tomb.
I'd have my monument erected here,
With broken mangled limbs still clasping her.
Queen. Hold, and I'll quit his arms—
[*The* Guards *offer their axes. They part.*
King. Now bear him hence.
Queen. O horrid tyrant!
[Guards *are hurrying* Don CARLOS *off.*
Stay, unhappy prince—
Turn, turn! O torment! must I leave you so?
No, stay, and take me with you where you go.
Don Car. Hark, slaves, my goddess summons me to stay.
Dogs! have you eyes, and can you disobey?
See her! Oh, let me but just touch my bliss.
[*Pressing forward.*
King. By hell! he shan't. Slaves, are ye mine or his?
Queen. My life—
Don Car. My soul, farewell!
[*Exeunt* Guards *with* Don CARLOS.
Queen. He's gone, he's gone!
Now, tyrant, to thy rage I'm left alone;
Give me my death, that hate both life and thee.
King. I know thou dost; yet live.
Queen. O misery! [*Throws herself down.*
Why was I born to be thus cursed? or why
Should life be forced, when 'tis so sweet to die?
King [*To* D. of EBOLI]. Thou, woman, hast been false; but, to renew
Thy credit in my heart, assist me now.

Prepare a draught of poison, such as will
Act slow, and by degrees of torment kill.
Give it the queen, and, to prevent all sense
Of dying, tell her I've released the prince,
And that ere morning he'll attend her. I
In a disguise his presence will supply;
So glut my rage, and smiling see her die.

D. of Eboli. Your majesty shall be obeyed.

Ruy-Gom. Do, work thy mischiefs to their last degree,
And when they're in their height I'll murder thee.
[*Aside.*

King. Now, Gomez, ply my rage and keep it hot:
O'er love and nature I've the conquest got.
Still charming beauty triumphs in her eyes:
[*Looking at the* QUEEN.
Yet for my honour and my rest she dies.
[*Exeunt* QUEEN *and* Women.
But, oh! what ease can I expect to get,
When I must purchase at so dear a rate?
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Palace.*

Enter KING *disguised.*

KING. 'Tis night; the season when the happy take
Repose, and only wretches are awake.
Now discontented ghosts begin their rounds,
Haunt ruined buildings and unwholesome grounds;
Or at the curtains of the restless wait,
To frighten them with some sad tale of fate.
When I would rest, I can no rest obtain:
The ills I've borne even o'er my slumbers reign,
And in sad dreams torment me o'er again.
The fatal business is ere this begun:
I'm shocked, and start to think what I have done.
But I forget how I that Philip am
So much for constancy renowned by fame;
Who through the progress of my life was ne'er
By hopes transported, or depressed by fear.
No, it is gone too far to be recalled,
And steadfastness will make the act extolled.

Enter Duchess of EBOLI, *in a night-gown.*

Who? Eboli?

D. of Eboli. My lord.

King. Is the deed done?

D. of Eboli. 'Tis, and the queen to seek repose is gone.

King. Can she expect it, who allowed me none?
No, Eboli; her dreams must be as full
Of horror, and as hellish as her soul.
Does she believe the prince has freedom gained?

D. of Eboli. She does.

King. How were the tidings entertained?

D. of Eboli. O'er all her face young wandering blushes were,
Such as speak hopes too weak to conquer fear:—
But when confirmed, no lover e'er so kind;
She clasped me fast, caressed, and called me friend.
Which opportunity I took, to give
The poison; and till day she cannot live.

King. Quickly then to her; say that Carlos here
Waits to confirm his happiness with her.
Go, that my vengeance I may finish quite:
'Twould be imperfect, should I lose the sight.
But to contrive that I may not be known,
And she may still mistake me for my son,
Remove all light but that which may suffice
To let her see me scorn her when she dies.

D. of Eboli. You'll find her all in rueful sables clad,
With one dim lamp that yields imperfect light,
Such as in vaults assist the ghastly shade,
Where wretched widows come to weep at night.
Thus she resolves to die, or living mourn,
Till Carlos shall with liberty return. [*Exit.*

King. O steadfast sin! incorrigible lust!
Not damned! it is impossible; she must.
How do I long to see her in her pains,
The poisonous sulphur rolling through her veins!

Enter Don JOHN *and* Attendants.

Who's there? my brother?

Don John. Yes, sir, and your friend.
What can your presence here so late intend?
King. O Austria! Fate's at work; a deed's in hand
Will put thy youthful courage to a stand.
Survey me; do I look as heretofore?
Don John. You look like King of Spain, and lord of power;
Like one who still seeks glory on the wing;
You look as I would do, were I a king.
King. A king! why I am more, I'm all that can
Be counted miserable in a man.
But thou shalt see how calm anon I'll grow;
I'll be as happy and as gay as thou.
Don John. No, sir; my happiness you cannot have,
Whilst to your abject passions thus a slave.
To know my ease, you thoughts like mine must bring,
Be something less a man, and more a king.
King. I'm growing so. 'Tis true that long I strove
With pleading nature, combated with love,
Those witchcrafts that had bound my soul so fast;
But now the date of the enchantment's past:
Before my rage like ruins down they fall,
And I mount up true monarch o'er them all.
Don John. I know your queen and son you've doomed to die,
And fear by this the fatal hour is nigh.
Why would you cut a sure succession off,
At which your friends must grieve, and foes will laugh;
As if, since age has from you took away
Increase, you'd grow malicious, and destroy?
King. Doubt it not, Austria: thou my brother art,
And in my blood I'm certain hast a part.
Only the justice of my vengeance own,—
Thou'rt heir of Spain, and my adopted son.
Don John. I must confess there in a crown are charms,
Which I would court in bloody fields and arms;
But in my nephew's wrong I must decline,

Since he must be extinguished ere I shine.
To mount a throne o'er battlements I'd climb,
Where Death should wait on me, not I on him.
Did you e'er love, or have you ever known
The mighty value of so brave a son?

King. I guessed I should be treated thus before;
I know it is thy kindness, but no more.
Thou, living free, alas! art easy grown
And think'st all hearts as honest as thy own.

Don John. Not, sir, so easy as I must be bold,
And speak what you perhaps would have untold;
That you're a slave to the vilest that obey,
Such as disgrace on royal favour lay,
And blindly follow as they lead astray:
Voracious varlets, sordid hangers-on;
Best by familiarity they're known,
Yet shrink at frowns; but when you smile they fawn.
They're these have wronged you, and abused your ears,
Possessed your mind with false misgrounded fears.

King. Misgrounded fears? Why, is there any truth
In women's vows, or disobedient youth?
I sooner would believe this world were Heaven,
Where I have nought but toils and torment met,
And never comfort yet to man was given.
But thou shalt see how my revenge I'll treat.

[*A curtain is drawn, and discovers the* QUEEN *alone in mourning on her couch, with a lamp by her.*

Look where she sits, as quiet and serene [*Ironically.*
As if she never had a thought of sin,
In mourning, her wronged innocence to show!
She has sworn't so oft, that she believes it true.
O'erwhelmed with sorrow she'll in darkness dwell:
So we have heard of witches in a cell,
Treating with fiends, and making leagues with hell.

[*The* QUEEN *rises and comes towards him.*

Queen. My lord! Prince Carlos! may it be believed?
Are my eyes blessed; and am I not deceived?

King. My queen, my love, I'm here—
[*Embraces her.*

Queen. My lord the king!
This is surprising kindness which you bring.
Can you believe me innocent at last?
Methinks my griefs are half already past.

King. O tongue, in nothing practised but deceit!
Too well she knew him, not to find the cheat. [*Aside.*
Yes, vile incestuous woman, it is I,
The king: look on me well, despair, and die.

Queen. Why had you not pronounced my doom before,
Since to affliction you could add no more?
Methinks death is less welcome, when I find
You could but counterfeit a look that's kind.

King. No, now thou'rt fit for death: had I believed
Thou couldst have been more wicked, thou hadst lived,—
Lived and gone on in lust and riot still;
But I perceived thee early ripe for hell:
And, that of the reward thou mightst not miss,
This night thou'st drank thy bane, thou'rt poisoned;
Thou art— yes,

Queen. Then welcome everlasting bliss!
But, ere I die, let me here make a vow,—
By Heaven, and all I hope for there, I'm true!

King. Vows you had always ready when you spoke:
How many of them have you made, and broke!
Yet there's a Power that does your falsehood hear,
A just one too, that lets thee live to swear.
How comes it that above such mercy dwells,
To permit sin, and make us infidels?

Queen. You have been ever so to all that's good,
My innocence had else been understood.
At first your love was nothing but your pride.
When I arrived to be the prince's bride,
You then a kind indulgent father were;
But, finding me unfortunately fair,
Thought me a prize too rich to be possessed

By him, and forced yourself into my breast,
Where you maintained an unresisted power;
Not your own daughter could have loved you more,
Till, conscious of your age, my faith was blamed,
And I a lewd adulteress proclaimed,
Accused of foulest incest with your son—
What more could my worst enemy have done?

King. Nothing, I hope; I would not have it said
That in my vengeance any fault I made.
Love me! O low pretence, too feebly built!
But 'tis the constant fault of dying guilt
Even to the last to cry they're innocent,
When their despair's so great, they can't repent.

Queen. Thus having urged your malice to the head,
You spitefully are come to rail me dead.
Had I been man, and had an impious wife,
With speedy fury I'd have snatched her life;
Torn a broad passage open to her heart,
And there have ransacked each polluted part;
Triumphed and laughed to have seen the issuing flood,
And wantonly have bathed my hands in blood.
That had outdone the low revenge you bring,
Much fitter for a woman than a king.

King. I'm glad I know what death you'd wish to have:
You would go down in silence to your grave;
Remove from future fame, as present times,
And bury with you, if you could, your crimes.
No, I will have my justice understood,
Proclaim thy falsehood and thy lust aloud.

Queen. About it then, the noble work begin;
Be proud, and boast how cruel you have been.
Oh, how a monarch's glory 'twill advance!
Do, quickly let it reach the ears of France.
I've there a royal brother that is young,
Who'll certainly revenge his sister's wrong;
Into thy Spain a mighty army bring,

Tumble thee from thy throne a wretched thing,
And make it quite forgot thou e'er wert king.
King. I ne'er had pleasure with her till this night:
The viper finds she's crushed, and fain would bite.—
Oh! were he here, and durst maintain that word,
I'd like an eagle seize the callow bird,
And gripe him till the dastard craven cried;
Then throw him panting by his sister's side.
Queen. Alas! I faint and sink; my lord, your hand!
[*To* DON JOHN.
My spirits fail, and I want strength to stand.
Don John. O jealousy!
A curse which none but he that bears it knows!
[*Leads her to a chair.*
So rich a treasure who would live to lose?
King. The poison works, Heaven grant there were enough!
She is so foul, she may be poison-proof.
Now my false fair one—
Queen. Tyrant, hence, begone!
This hour's my last, and let it be my own.
Away, away! I would not leave the light
With such a hated object in my sight.
King. No, I will stay, and even thy prayers prevent;
I would not give thee leisure to repent;
But let thy sins all in one throng combine
To plague thy soul, as thou hast tortured mine.
Queen. Glut then your eyes, your tyrant-fury feed,
And triumph; but remember, when I'm dead,
Hereafter on your dying pillows you
May feel those tortures which you give me now.
Go on, your worst reproaches I can bear,
And with them all you shall not force a tear.
King. Thus, Austria, my lost freedom I obtain,
And once more shall appear myself again.
Love held me fast whilst, like a foolish boy,
I of the thing was fond because 'twas gay;
But now I've thrown the gaudy toy away.

D. of Eboli [*Within*]. Help! murder! help!
King. See, Austria, whence that cry.
Call up our guards; there may be danger nigh.

Enter Guards; *then re-enter* Duchess of EBOLI *in her night-dress, wounded and bleeding;* RUY-GOMEZ *pursuing her.*

D. of Eboli. Oh! guard me from that cruel murder-
But 'tis in vain, the steel has gone too far. [er:
Turn, wretched king, I've something to unfold;
Nor can I die till the sad secret's told.
King. The woman's mad; to some apartment by
Remove her, where she may grow tame and die.—
Fate came abroad to night, resolved to range:
I love a kind companion in revenge. [*Hugs* RUY-GOMEZ.
D. of Eboli. If in your heart truth any favour wins,
If e'er you would repent of secret sins,
Hear me a word.
King. What wouldst thou say? Be brief.
D. of Eboli. Do what you can to save that precious
Try every art that may her death prevent: [life;
You are abused, and she is innocent.
When I perceived my hopes of you were vain,
Led by my lust, I practised all my charms
To gain the prince, Don Carlos, to my arms;
But, there too crossed, I did the purpose change,
And pride made him my engine for revenge;
[*To* RUY-GOMEZ.
Taught him to raise your growing jealousy.
Then my wild passion at this prince did fly,
[*To* Don JOHN.
And that was done for which I now must die.
King. Ha! Gomez, speak, and quickly; is it so?
Ruy-Gom. I'm sorry you should doubt if't be or no.
She, by whose lust my honour was betrayed,
Cannot want malice now to take my head;
And therefore does this penitence pretend.

D. of Eboli. O Austria! take away that ugly fiend:
He smiles and mocks me, waiting for my soul;
See how his glaring fiery eyeballs roll!
Ruy-Gom. Thus is her fancy tortured by her guilt:
But, since you'll have my blood, let it be spilt.
King [*To* RUY-GOMEZ]. No more!—[*To* D. of EBOLI.]
Speak on, I charge thee, by the rest
Thou hopest, the truth, and as thou shalt be blest.
D. of Eboli. As what I've said is so,
There may I find, where I must answer all,
What most I need, Heaven's mercy on my soul! [*Dies.*
King. Heaven! she was sensible that she should die,
And durst not in the minute tell a lie.
Don John. His guilt's too plain; see his wild staring eye.
By unconcern he would show innocence;
But hardened guilt ne'er wanted the pretence
Of great submission, when't had no defence.
Thus, whilst of life you show this little care,
You seem not guiltless, but betray despair.
King. His life! What satisfaction can that give?
But oh! in doubt I must for ever live,
And lose my peace—yet I the truth will find;
I'll rack him for't. Go, in this minute bind
Him to the wheel—
Ruy-Gom. How have I this deserved,
Who only your commands obeyed and served?
What would you have me do?
King. I'd have thee tell
The truth: do, Gomez; all shall then be well.
Ruy-Gom. Alas! like you, sir, in a cloud I'm lost.
And can but tell you what I think, at most.
You set me as a spy upon the prince,
And I still brought the best intelligence
I could; till, finding him too much aware
Of me, I nearer measures took by her:
Which if I after a false copy drew,
'Tis I have been unfortunate as you.

King. And is this all thou hast for life to show?
Ruy-Gom. Dear sir, your pardon, it is all I know.
King. Then villain, I am damned as well as thou.
Heaven! where is now thy sleeping providence,
That took so little care of innocence?
O Austria, had I to thy truth inclined,
Had I been half so good as thou wert kind!
But I'm too tame; secure the traitor. Oh!
[Guards *seize* RUY-GOMEZ.
Earth, open! to thy centre let me go!
And there for ever hide my impious head!
Thou fairest, purest creature Heaven e'er made,
Thy injured truth too late I've understood:
Yet live, and be immortal as thou'rt good.
Queen. Can you to think me innocent incline
On her bare word, and would not credit mine?
The poison's very busy at my heart;
Methinks I see Death shake his threatening dart.
Why are you kind, and make it hard to die?
Persist, continue on the injury;
Call me still vile, incestuous, all that's foul—
King. Oh, pity, pity my despairing soul!
Sink it not quite. Raise my physicians straight;
Hasten them quickly ere it be too late;
Propose rewards may set their skill at strife:
I'll give my crown to him that saves her life.
Cursed dog! [*To* RUY-GOMEZ.
Don John. Vile prostitute!
King. Revengeful fiend!
But I've forgotten half—to Carlos send;
Prevent what his despair may make him do.

Enter HENRIETTA.

Hen. O horror, horror! everlasting woe!
The prince, the prince!
King. Ha! speak.
Hen. He dies, he dies!

Within upon his couch he bleeding lies,
Just taken from a bath, his veins all cut,
From which the springing blood flows swiftly out.
He threatens death on all that shall oppose
His fate, to save that life which he will lose.

King. Dear Austria, hasten, all thy interest use;
Tell him it is to friendship an offence,
And let him know his father's penitence.
Beg him to live.

Ruy-Gom. Since you've decreed my death, know 'twill be hard:
The bath by me was poisoned when prepared.
I owed him that for his late pride and scorn.

King. There never was so cursed a villain born.
But by revenge such pains he shall go through
As even religious cruelty ne'er knew.
Rack him! I'll broil him, burn him by degrees,
Fresh torments for him every hour devise,
Till he curse Heaven, and then the caitiff dies.

Queen. My faithful Henrietta, art thou come
To wait thy unhappy mistress to her tomb?
I brought thee hither from thy parents young,
And now must leave thee to Heaven knows what wrong.
But Heaven to its protection will receive
Such goodness; let it then thy queen forgive!

Hen. How much I loved you, madam, none can tell;
For 'tis unspeakable, I loved so well.
A proof of it the world shall quickly find;
For, when you die, I'll scorn to stay behind.

Enter Don CARLOS, *supported between two* Attendants *and bleeding.*

Don John. See, sir, your son.

King. My son! But oh! how dare
I use that name, when this sad object's near?
See, injured prince, who 'tis thy pardon craves,

No more thy father, but the worst of slaves:
Behold the tears that from these fountains flow.
Don Car. I come to take my farewell, ere I go
To that bright dwelling where there is no room
For blood, and where the cruel never come.
King. I know there is not, therefore must despair.
O Heaven! his cruelty I cannot bear.—
Dost thou not hear thy wretched father sue?
Don Car. My father! speak the words once more; is't you?
And may I think the dear conversion true?
Oh that I could!
King. By Heaven thou must—it is!
Let me embrace and kiss thy trembling knees.
Why wilt thou die? no, live, my Carlos, live,
And all the wrongs that I have done forgive!
Don Car. Life was my curse, and given me sure in spite.
Oh! had I perished when I first saw light,
I never then these miseries had brought
On you, nor by you had been guilty thought.
Prop me: apace I feel my life decay.
The little time on earth I have to stay,
Grant I without offence may here bestow;
[*Pointing to the* QUEEN.
You cannot certainly be jealous now.
King. Break, break, my heart!
[*Leads* Don CARLOS *to the chair.*
Don Car. You've thus more kindness shown
Than if you'd crowned, and placed me on your throne.
Methinks so highly happy I appear
That I could pity you, to see you there.
Take me away again:—you are too good.
Queen. Carlos, is't you? Oh, stop that royal flood;
Live, and possess your father's throne, when I
In dark and gloomy shades forgotten lie.

Don Car. Crowns are beneath me; I have higher pride:
Thus on you fixed, and dying by your side,
How much a life and empire I disdain!
No, we'll together mount, where both shall reign
Above all wrongs, and never more complain.
Queen. O matchless youth! O constancy divine!
Sure there was never love that equalled thine;
Nor any so unfortunate as mine.
Henceforth forsaken virgins shall in songs,
When they would ease their own, repeat thy wrongs;
And in remembrance of thee, for thy sake,
A solemn annual procession make;
In chaste devotion as fair pilgrims come,
With hyacinths and lilies deck thy tomb.
But one thing more, and then, vain world, adieu!
It is to reconcile my lord and you.
Don Car. He has done no wrong to me; I am possessed
Of all, beyond my expectation blest.
But yet methinks there's something in my heart
Tells me, I must not too unkindly part.—
Father, draw nearer, raise me with your hand;
Before I die, what is't you would command?
King. Why wert thou made so excellently good?
And why was it no sooner understood?
But I was cursed, and blindly led astray;
Oh! for thy father, for thy father pray.
Thou mayst ask that which I'm too vile to dare;
And leave me not tormented by despair.
Don Car. Thus then with the remains of life we kneel. [Don CARLOS *and the* QUEEN *sink out of their chairs and kneel.*
May you be ever free from all that's ill!
Queen. And everlasting peace upon you dwell!
King. No more: this virtue's too divinely bright;
My darkened soul, too conversant with night,

Grows blind, and overcome with too much light.
Here, raise them up—gently—ye slaves, down, down!
Ye glorious toils, a sceptre and a crown,
For ever be forgotten; in your stead,
Only eternal darkness wrap my head.

Queen. Where are you? oh! farewell, I must be gone.

King. Blest happy soul, take not thy flight so soon:
Stay till I die, then bear mine with thee too,
And guard it up, which else must sink below.

Queen. From all my injuries and all my fears,
From jealousy, love's bane, the worst of cares,
Thus I remove to find that stranger, rest.
Carlos, thy hand, receive me on thy breast;
Within this minute how shall we be blest!

Don Car. Oh, far above
Whatever wishes framed, or hopes designed;
Thus, where we go, we shall the angels find
For ever praising, and for ever kind.

Queen. Make haste; in the first sphere I'll for you stay;
Thence we'll rise both to everlasting day.
Farewell— [*Dies.*

Don Car. I follow you; now close my eyes;
[*Leans on her bosom.*
Thus all o'er bliss the happy Carlos dies. [*Dies.*

King. They're gone, they're gone, where I must ne'er aspire.
Run, sally out, and set the world on fire;
Alarum Nature, let loose all the winds,
Set free those spirits whom strong magic binds;
Let the earth open all her sulphurous veins,
The fiends start from their hell, and shake their chains;
Till all things from their harmony decline,
And the confusion be as great as mine!

Here I'll lie down, and never more arise.
Howl out my life, and rend the air with cries.

Don John. Hold, sir, afford your labouring heart some ease.

King. Oh! name it not; there's no such thing as peace.
From these warm lips yet one soft kiss I'll take.
How my heart beats! why won't the rebel break?
My love, my Carlos, I'm thy father—speak.
Oh! he regards not now my miseries.
But's deaf to my complaint, as I have been to his.
Oh! now I think on't better, all is well.
Here's one that's just descending into hell:
How comes it that he's not already gone?
The sluggard's lazy, but I'll spur him on.
Hey! how he flies! [*Stabs* RUY-GOMEZ.

Ruy-Gom. Twas aimed well at my heart:
That I had strength enough but to retort!
Dull life, so tamely must I from thee part?
Curses and plagues! revenge, where art thou now?
Meet, meet me at thy own dark house below! [*Dies.*

King. He's gone, and now there's not so vile a thing
As I—

Don John. Remember, sir, you are a king.

King. A king! it is too little: I'll be more,
I tell thee: Nero was an emperor:
He killed his mother, but I've that out-done.
Murdered a loyal wife and guiltless son.
Yet, Austria, why should I grow mad for that?
Is it my fault I was unfortunate?

Don John. Collect your spirits, sir, and calm your mind.

King. Look to't: strange things I tell thee are designed.
Thou, Austria, shalt grow old, and in thy age
Dote, dote, my hero:—oh, a long gray beard,
With eyes distilling rheum, and hollow cheeks,

Will be such charms, thou canst not want success!
But, above all, beware of jealousy;
It was the dreadful curse that ruined me.

Don John. Dread sir, no more.

King. O heart! O Heaven! but stay,
Named I not Heaven? I did, and at the word
(Methought I saw't) the azure fabric stirred.
Oh, for my queen and son the saints prepare;
But I'll pursue and overtake them there;
Whirl, stop the sun, arrest his charioteer;
I'll ride in that: away! pull, pull him down!
Oh, how I'll hurl the wild-fire as I run!
Now, now I mount— [*Runs off raving.*

Don John. Look to the king.
See of this fair one, too, strict care be had.
[*Pointing to* HENRIETTA.
Despair, how vast a triumph hast thou made!
No more in love's enervate charms I'll lie;
Shaking off softness, to the camp I'll fly,
Where thirst of fame the active hero warms;
And what I've lost in peace, regain in arms. [*Exeunt.*

Spoken by a Girl.

Now what d'ye think my message hither means?
Yonder's the poet sick behind the scenes:
He told me there was pity in my face,
And therefore sent me here to make his peace.
Let me for once persuade ye to be kind;
For he has promised me to stand my friend;
And if this time I can your kindness move,
He'll write for me, he swears by all above,
When I am big enough to be in love.
Now won't you be good-natured, ye fine men?
Indeed I'll grow as fast as e'er I can,
And try if to his promise he'll be true.
Think on't; when that time comes, you do not know
But I may grow in love with some of you;
Or, at the worst, I'm certain I shall see
Amongst you those who'll swear they're so with me.
But now, if by my suit you'll not be won,—
You know what your unkindness oft has done,—
I'll e'en forsake the play-house, and turn nun.[1]

[1] This alludes to the retirement of Mrs. Reeves, or, as she was usually termed, Madam Reeves, a very beautiful and accomplished actress, between whom and Dryden there was supposed to be rather too close an intimacy. She withdrew from the stage to a cloister.—*Thornton.*

THE ORPHAN;

OR,

THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE.

Qui pelago credit, magno se fœnore tollit;
Qui pugnas et castra petit, præcingitur auro;
Vilis adulator picto jacet ebrius ostro,
Et qui sollicitat nuptas, ad præmia peccat:
Sola pruinosis horret facundia pannis
Atque inopi lingua desertas invocat Artes.—

PETRON. ARB. SATYRIC., Cap. 83.[1]

[1] High profits tempt the merchant to the main;
The pouch of gold repays the soldier's pain;
The parasite will dine, and fawns to win
The couch and cup; the pander sells his sin.
Genius alone a shivering trade pursues,
And courts without a fee the friendless muse.—A. W. V.

"THE ORPHAN" was first represented in 1680, and printed during the same year. Thornton, following Langbaine, states that the play was founded on the story of Brandon, which he reprints in his edition of Otway, and which forms part of a novel entitled "English Adventures by a Person of Honour," published in 1676, and said to be by Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery. The adventures are supposed to occur to Henry VIII., who, when young, is reported to have often wandered abroad in disguise, like Haroun-Al-Raschid. He is represented going about with Brandon, a young nobleman, afterwards married to Henry's sister, widow of Louis XII., and founder of the Suffolk family. Brandon relates the circumstances (which are in substance identical with the story of *The Orphan*) as having happened to himself, the main incidents being alleged to be true. A yet earlier play, *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, by Robert Tailor (1612-13), has very much the same foundation. As to the possibility of Monimia's deception through the personation of one twin brother by another, we must remember that this took place in darkness, and that not a word was spoken, total silence having been agreed upon when the secret meeting with Castalio was arranged, on account of the proximity of Acasto's chamber. Acasto, the guardian of Monimia, is believed to be a portrait of the first Duke of Ormond (see Carte's "Life of Ormond").

The Orphan was acted at Covent Garden in 1815, and subsequently at the Bath Theatre in 1819, when Miss O'Neill performed the part of Monimia. The celebrated Mrs. Bracegirdle appeared in the character of Cordelio, Polydore's page, when she was a child about six years old.

To Her Royal Highness the DUCHESS.[1]

Madam,

FTER having a great while wished to write something that might be worthy to lay at your Highness's feet, and finding it impossible: since the world has been so kind to me to judge of this poem to my advantage, as the most pardonable fault which I have made in its kind, I had sinned against myself, if I had not chosen this opportunity to implore (what my ambition is most fond of) your favour and protection.

For, though Fortune would not so far bless my endeavours as to encourage them with your Royal Highness's presence, when this came into the world, yet I cannot but declare it was my design and hopes it might have been your divertisement in that happy season when you returned again to cheer all those eyes that had before wept for your departure, and enliven all hearts that had drooped for your absence. When Wit ought to have paid its choicest tributes in, and Joy have known no limits, then I hoped my little mite would not have been rejected; though my ill fortune was too hard for me, and I lost a greater honour, by your Royal Highness's absence, than all the applauses of the world besides can make me reparation for.

Nevertheless, I thought myself not quite unhappy, so long as I had hopes this way yet to recompense my disappointment past; when I considered also that poetry might claim right to a little share in your favour: for Tasso and Ariosto, some of the best, have made their names eternal by transmitting to after-ages the glory of your ancestors; and under the spreading of that shade, where two of the best have planted their laurels, how honoured

[1] Mary Beatrix Eleonora of Este, daughter of the Duke of Modena. She was the Duke of York's second wife. The allusion to Tasso may have proved not altogether delightful to a Princess of this house.

should I be, who am the worst, if but a branch might grow for me!

I dare not think of offering anything in this address, that might look like a panegyric, for fear lest, when I have done my best, the world should condemn me for saying too little, and you yourself check me for meddling with a task unfit for my talent.

For the description of virtues and perfections so rare as yours are ought to be done by as deliberate, as skilful a hand; the features must be drawn very fine, to be like; hasty daubing would but spoil the picture, and make it so unnatural as must want false lights to set it off: and your virtue can receive no more lustre from praises than your beauty can be improved by art; which, as it charms the bravest Prince that ever amazed the world with his virtue, so let but all other hearts inquire into themselves, and then judge how it ought to be praised.

Your love, too, as none but that great hero who has it could deserve it, and therefore, by a particular lot from Heaven, was destined to so extraordinary a blessing, so matchless for itself, and so wondrous for its constancy, shall be remembered to your immortal honour, when all other transactions of the age you live in shall be forgotten.

But I forget that I am to ask pardon for the fault I have been all this while committing. Wherefore, I beg your Highness to forgive me this presumption, and that you will be pleased to think well of one who cannot help resolving, with all the actions of life, to endeavour to deserve it: nay, more, I would beg, and hope it may be granted, that I may, through yours, never want an advocate in his favour, whose heart and mind you have so entire a share in: it is my only portion and my fortune; I cannot but be happy so long as I have but hopes I may enjoy it, and I must be miserable should it ever be my ill fate to lose it.

This, with eternal wishes for your Royal Highness's content, happiness, and prosperity, in all humility is resented by

Your most obedient, and devoted Servant,

THO. OTWAY.

To you, great judges in this writing age,
The sons of wit, and patrons of the stage,
With all those humble thoughts which still have swayed
His pride, much doubting, trembling, and afraid
Of what is to his want of merit due,
And awed by every excellence in you,
The author sends to beg you would be kind,
And spare those many faults you needs must find.
You to whom wit a common foe is grown,
The thing ye scorn and publicly disown;
Though now perhaps you're here for other ends,
He swears to me, ye ought to be his friends:
For he ne'er called ye yet insipid tools;
Nor wrote one line to tell you ye were fools:
But says of wit ye have so large a store,
So very much, you never will have more.
He ne'er with libel treated yet the town,
The names of honest men bedaubed and shown;
Nay, never once lampooned the harmless life
Of suburb-virgin, or of city-wife.
Satire's the effect of poetry's disease,
Which, sick of a lewd age, she vents for ease,
But now her only strife should be to please;
Since of ill fate the baneful cloud's withdrawn,
And happiness again begins to dawn;
Since back with joy and triumph he is come,[1]
That always drove fears hence, ne'er brought them home.
Oft has he ploughed the boisterous ocean o'er,
Yet ne'er more welcome to the longing shore,
Not when he brought home victories before.
For then fresh laurels flourished on his brow,
And he comes crowned with olive-branches now;
Receive him! oh, receive him as his friends;
Embrace the blessings which he recommends:
Such quiet as your foes shall ne'er destroy;
Then shake off fears, and clap your hands for joy.

[1] The Duke of York; who had returned from Brussels, whither he had retired to escape the clamours of the Protestant party.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ACASTO, a Nobleman retired from Court, and living privately in the Country.

CASTALIO, } Twin Sons of Acasto.
POLYDORE, }

CHAMONT, a young Soldier of Fortune.

ERNESTO, } Servants to Acasto.
PAULINO, }

CORDELIO, Polydore's Page.

Chaplain.

Servants.

MONIMIA, the Orphan, left under the Guardianship of Acasto.

SERINA, Acasto's Daughter.

FLORELLA, Monimia's Woman.

SCENE—BOHEMIA.

THE ORPHAN.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*An Ante-Room in* ACASTO'S *House.*

Enter PAULINO *and* ERNESTO.

PAUL. 'Tis strange, Ernesto, this severity
Should still reign powerful in Acasto's mind,
To hate the court, where he was bred, and lived,
All honours heaped on him that power could give.

Ern. 'Tis true; he thither came a private gentleman,
But young and brave, and of a family
Ancient and noble as the empire holds.
The honours he has gained are justly his,—
He purchased them in war; thrice has he led
An army 'gainst the rebels, and as often
Returned with victory: the world has not
A truer soldier, or a better subject.

Paul. It was his virtue at first made me serve him;
He is the best of masters, as of friends.
I know he has lately been invited thither;

Yet still he keeps his stubborn purpose; cries,
He's old, and willingly would be at rest:
I doubt there's deep resentment in his mind,
For the late slight his honour suffered there.

Ern. Has he not reason? When, for what he had borne,—
Long, hard, and faithful toil,—he might have claimed
Places in honour, and employment high,
A huffing, shining, flattering, cringing coward,
A canker-worm of peace, was raised above him.

Paul. Yet still he holds just value for the king,
Nor ever names him but with highest reverence.
'Tis noble that—

Ern. Oh! I have heard him, wanton in his praise,
Speak things of him might charm the ears of envy.

Paul. Oh! may he live till Nature's self grow old,
And from her womb no more can bless the earth!
For, when he dies, farewell all honour, bounty,
All generous encouragement of arts!
For Charity herself becomes a widow.

Ern. No, he has two sons, that were ordained to be
As well his virtues', as his fortune's heirs.

Paul. They're both of nature mild, and full of sweetness;
They came twins from the womb, and still they live
As if they would go twins too to the grave.
Neither has anything he calls his own,
But of each other's joys, as griefs, partaking;
So very honestly, so well they love,
As they were only for each other born.

Ern. Never was parent in an offspring happier!
He has a daughter too, whose blooming age
Promises goodness equal to her beauty.

Paul. And as there is a friendship 'twixt the brethren,
So has her infant nature chosen too
A faithful partner of her thoughts and wishes,
And kind companion of her harmless pleasures.

Ern. You mean the beauteous orphan, fair Monimia.

Paul. The same, the daughter of the brave Chamont.
He was our lord's companion in the wars;
Where such a wondrous friendship grew between them
As only death could end. Chamont's estate
Was ruined in our late and civil discords;
Therefore, unable to advance her fortune,
He left his daughter to our master's care,—
To such a care, as she scarce lost a father.

Ern. Her brother to the emperor's wars went early,
To seek a fortune, or a noble fate;
Whence he with honour is expected back,
And mighty marks of that great prince's favour.

Paul. Our master never would permit his sons
To launch for fortune in the uncertain world;
But warns them to avoid both courts and camps,
Where dilatory Fortune plays the jilt
With the brave, noble, honest, gallant man,
To throw herself away on fools and knaves.

Ern. They both have forward, generous, active spirits:
'Tis daily their petition to their father,
To send them forth where glory's to be gotten;
They cry they're weary of their lazy home,
Restless to do some thing that Fame may talk of.
To-day they chased the boar, and near this time
Should be returned.

Paul. Oh, that's a royal sport!
We yet may see the old man in a morning,
Lusty as health, come ruddy to the field,
And there pursue the chase, as if he meant
To o'ertake time, and bring back youth again.

[*Exeunt* PAULINO *and* ERNESTO.

Enter CASTALIO, POLYDORE, *and* Page.

Cast. Polydore, our sport
Has been to-day much better for the danger:
When on the brink the foaming boar I met,

And in his side thought to have lodged my spear,
The desperate savage rushed within my force,
And bore me headlong with him down the rock.

Pol. But then—

Cast. Ay, then, my brother, my friend Polydore,
Like Perseus mounted on his wingèd steed,
Came on, and down the dangerous precipice leaped
To save Castalio. 'Twas a god-like act!

Pol. But when I came, I found you conqueror.
Oh, my heart danced to see your danger past!
The heat and fury of the chase was cooled,
And I had nothing in my mind but joy.

Cast. So, Polydore, methinks we might in war
Rush on together; thou shouldst be my guard,
And I be thine; what is't could hurt us then?
Now half the youth of Europe are in arms,
How fulsome must it be to stay behind,
And die of rank diseases here at home!

Pol. No, let me purchase in my youth renown,
To make me loved and valued when I'm old:
I would be busy in the world, and learn,
Not like a coarse and useless dunghill-weed,
Fixed to one spot, and rot just as I grew.

Cast. Our father
Has ta'en himself a surfeit of the world,
And cries it is not safe that we should taste it:
I own I've duty very powerful in me;
And, though I'd hazard all to raise my name,
Yet he's so tender and so good a father,
I could not do a thing to cross his will.

Pol. Castalio, I have doubts within my heart,
Which you, and only you, can satisfy:
Will you be free and candid to your friend?

Cast. Have I a thought my Polydore should not [know?
What can this mean?

Pol. Nay, I'll conjure you too,
By all the strictest bonds of faithful friendship,

To show your heart as naked in this point
As you would purge you of your sins to Heaven.
Cast. I will.
Pol. And, should I chance to touch it nearly, bear it
With all the sufferance of a tender friend.
Cast. As calmly as the wounded patient bears
The artist's hand that ministers his cure.
Pol. That's kindly said. You know our father's ward,
The fair Monimia;—is your heart at peace?
Is it so guarded that you could not love her?
Cast. Suppose I should?
Pol. Suppose you should not, brother?
Cast. You'd say, I must not.
Pol. That would sound too roughly
'Twixt friends and brothers, as we two are.
Cast. Is love a fault?
Pol. In one of us it may be:
What if I love her?
Cast. Then I must inform you
I loved her first, and cannot quit the claim,
But will preserve the birthright of my passion.
Pol. You will?
Cast. I will.
Pol. No more, I've done.
Cast. Why not?
Pol. I told you I had done;
But you, Castalio, would dispute it.
Cast. No,
Not with my Polydore; though I must own
My nature obstinate and void of sufferance.
Love reigns a very tyrant in my heart,
Attended on his throne by all his guards
Of furious wishes, fears, and nice suspicions.
I could not bear a rival in my friendship,
I am so much in love, and fond of thee.
Pol. Yet you would break this friendship

Cast. Not for crowns.
Pol. But for a toy you would, a woman's toy:
Unjust Castalio!
Cast. Pr'ythee, where's my fault?
Pol. You love Monimia.
Cast. Yes.
Pol. And you would kill me,
If I'm your rival.
Cast. No, sure we're such friends,
So much one man, that our affections too
Must be united, and the same as we are.
Pol. I dote upon Monimia.
Cast. Love her still;
Win, and enjoy her.
Pol. Both of us cannot.
Cast. No matter
Whose chance it prove; but let's not quarrel for't.
Pol. You would not wed Monimia, would you?
Cast. Wed her!
No! were she all desire could wish, as fair
As would the vainest of her sex be thought,
With wealth beyond what woman's pride could waste,
She should not cheat me of my freedom. Marry!
When I am old and weary of the world,
I may grow desperate,
And take a wife to mortify withal.
Pol. It is an elder brother's duty so
To propagate his family and name:
You would not have yours die and buried with you?
Cast. Mere vanity, and silly dotage all:
No, let me live at large, and when I die—
Pol. Who shall possess the estate you leave?
Cast. My friend,
If he survives me; if not, my king,
Who may bestow't again on some brave man,
Whose honesty and services deserve one.
Pol. 'Tis kindly offered.

Cast. By yon Heaven, I love
My Polydore beyond all worldly joys,
And would not shock his quiet, to be blest
With greater happiness than man e'er tasted.

Pol. And by that Heaven eternally I swear
To keep the kind Castalio in my heart.
Whose shall Monimia be?

Cast. No matter whose.

Pol. Were you not with her privately last night?

Cast. I was, and should have met her here again;
But the opportunity shall now be thine;
Myself will bring thee to the scene of love:
But have a care, by friendship I conjure thee,
That no false play be offered to thy brother!
Urge all thy powers to make thy passion prosper,
But wrong not mine.

Pol. Heaven blast me if I do!

Cast. If't prove thy fortune, Polydore, to conquer,
(For thou hast all the arts of fine persuasion!)
Trust me, and let me know thy love's success,
That I may ever after stifle mine.

Pol. Though she be dearer to my soul than rest
To weary pilgrims, or to misers gold,
To great men power, or wealthy cities pride,
Rather than wrong Castalio, I'd forget her.
For if ye, powers, have happiness in store,
When ye would shower down joys on Polydore,
In one great blessing all your bounty send,
That I may never lose so dear a friend!

[*Exeunt* CASTALIO *and* POLYDORE.

Enter MONIMIA.

Mon. So soon returned from hunting? this fair day
Seems as if sent to invite the world abroad.
Passed not Castalio and Polydore this way?

Page. Madam, just now.

Mon. Sure some ill fate's upon me;

Distrust and heaviness sit round my heart,
And apprehension shocks my timorous soul.
Why was I not laid in my peaceful grave
With my poor parents, and at rest as they are?
Instead of that, I'm wandering into cares.
Castalio! O Castalio! thou hast caught
My foolish heart; and, like a tender child,
That trusts his plaything to another hand,
I fear its harm, and fain would have it back.
Come near, Cordelio. I must chide you, sir.

Page. Why, madam, have I done you any wrong?

Mon. I never see you now; you have been kinder;
Sat by my bed, and sung me pretty songs:
Perhaps I've been ungrateful: here's money for you:
Will you oblige me? shall I see you oftener?

Page. Madam, I'd serve you with my soul;
But in a morning when you call me to you,
As by your bed I stand and tell you stories,
I am ashamed to see your swelling breasts,
It makes me blush, they are so very white.

Mon. O men, for flattery and deceit renowned!
Thus when you're young ye learn it all like him,
Till, as your years increase, that strengthens too,
To undo poor maids, and make our ruin easy.
Tell me, Cordelio, for thou oft hast heard
Their friendly converse and their bosom-secrets;
Sometimes, at least, have they not talked of me?

Page. O madam! very wickedly they've talked:
But I'm afraid to name it; for they say
Boys must be whipped that tell their master's secrets.

Mon. Fear not, Cordelio! it shall ne'er be known;
For I'll preserve the secret as 'twere mine.
Polydore cannot be so kind as I.
I'll furnish thee for all thy harmless sports
With pretty toys, and thou shalt be my page.

Page. And truly, madam, I had rather be so.
Methinks you love me better than my lord,

For he was never half so kind as you are.
What must I do?
Mon. Inform me how thou'st heard
Castalio, and his brother, use my name.
Page. With all the tenderness of love.
You were the subject of their last discourse:
At first I thought it would have fatal proved;
But, as the one grew hot, the other cooled,
And yielded to the frailty of his friend;
At last, after much struggling, 'twas resolved—
Mon. What, good Cordelio?
Page. Not to quarrel for you.
Mon. I would not have them; by my dearest hopes,
I would not be the argument of strife.
But surely my Castalio won't forsake me,
And make a mockery of my easy love?
Went they together?
Page. Yes, to seek you, madam.
Castalio promised Polydore to bring him
Where he alone might meet you,
And fairly try the fortune of his wishes.
Mon. Am I then grown so cheap, just to be made
A common stake, a prize for love in jest?
Was not Castalio very loth to yield it?
Or was it Polydore's unruly passion
That heightened the debate?
Page. The fault was Polydore's.
Castalio played with love, and smiling showed
The pleasure, not the pangs of his desire.
He said no woman's smiles should buy his freedom,
And marriage is a mortifying thing.
Mon. Then I am ruined! if Castalio's false,
Where is there faith and honour to be found?
Ye Gods, that guard the innocent and guide
The weak, protect and take me to your care!
Oh, but I love him! there's the rock will wreck me
Why was I made with all my sex's softness,

Yet want the cunning to conceal its follies?
I'll see Castalio, tax him with his falsehoods,
Be a true woman, rail, protest my wrongs;
Resolve to hate him, and yet love him still.

Re-enter CASTALIO *and* POLYDORE.

He comes, the conqueror comes! lie still, my heart,
And learn to bear thy injuries with scorn.

Cast. Madam, my brother begs he may have leave
To tell you something that concerns you nearly;
I leave you, as becomes me, and withdraw.

Mon. My Lord Castalio!

Cast. Madam!

Mon. Have you purposed
To abuse me palpably? what means this usage?
Why am I left with Polydore alone?

Cast. He best can tell you. Business of importance
Calls me away; I must attend my father.

Mon. Will you then leave me thus?

Cast. But for a moment.

Mon. It has been otherwise; the time has been,
When business might have stayed, and I been heard.

Cast. I could for ever hear thee; but this time
Matters of such odd circumstances press me,
That I must go. [*Exit.*

Mon. Then go, and, if't be possible, for ever.—
Well, my Lord Polydore, I guess your business,
And read the ill-natured purpose in your eyes.

Pol. If to desire you more than misers wealth,
Or dying men an hour of added life;
If softest wishes, and a heart more true
Than ever suffered yet for love disdained,
Speak an ill-nature, you accuse me justly.

Mon. Talk not of love, my lord; I must not hear it.

Pol. Who can behold such beauty and be silent?
Desire first taught us words: man, when created,
At first alone, long wandered up and down,

Forlorn, and silent as his vassal-beasts;
But when a Heaven-born maid, like you, appeared,
Strange pleasures filled his eyes, and fired his heart,
Unloosed his tongue, and his first talk was love.

Mon. The first-created pair, indeed, were blest;
They were the only objects of each other,
Therefore he courted her, and her alone;
But in this peopled world of beauty, where
There's roving room, where you may court, and ruin
A thousand more, why need you talk to me?

Pol. Oh! I could talk to thee for ever; thus
Eternally admiring, fix and gaze
On those dear eyes; for every glance they send
Darts through my soul, and almost gives enjoyment.

Mon. How can you labour thus for my undoing?
I must confess, indeed, I owe you more
Than ever I can hope or think to pay.
There always was a friendship 'twixt our families;
And therefore when my tender parents died,
Whose ruined fortunes too expired with them,
Your father's pity and his bounty took me,
A poor and helpless orphan, to his care.

Pol. 'Twas Heaven ordained it so, to make me happy.
Hence with this peevish virtue! 'tis a cheat;
And those who taught it first were hypocrites.
Come, these soft tender limbs were made for yielding!

Mon. Here on my knees, by Heaven's blest power I swear, [*Kneels.*
If you persist, I ne'er henceforth will see you,
But rather wander through the world a beggar,
And live on sordid scraps at proud men's doors;
For, though to fortune lost, I still inherit
My mother's virtues, and my father's honour.

Pol. Intolerable vanity! your sex
Was never in the right; you're always false,
Or silly; even your dresses are not more
Fantastic than your appetites; you think

Of nothing twice; opinion you have none:
To-day you're nice, to-morrow not so free;
Now smile, then frown; now sorrowful, then glad;
Now pleased, now not; and all you know not why!
Virtue you affect, inconstancy's your practice;
And, when your loose desires once get dominion,
No hungry churl feeds coarser at a feast;
Every rank fool goes down—

Mon. Indeed, my lord,
I own my sex's follies; I've them all,
And, to avoid its faults, must fly from you.
Therefore, believe me, could you raise me high
As most fantastic woman's wish could reach,
And lay all nature's riches at my feet,
I'd rather run a savage in the woods
Amongst brute beasts, grow wrinkled and deformed
As wildness and most rude neglect could make me,
So I might still enjoy my honour safe
From the destroying wiles of faithless men. [*Exit.*

Pol. Who'd be that sordid foolish thing called man,
To cringe thus, fawn, and flatter for a pleasure,
Which beasts enjoy so very much above him?
The lusty bull ranges through all the field,
And, from the herd singling his female out,
Enjoys her, and abandons her at will.
It shall be so; I'll yet possess my love,
Wait on, and watch her loose unguarded hours;
Then, when her roving thoughts have been abroad,
And brought in wanton wishes to her heart,
In the very minute when her virtue nods,
I'll rush upon her in a storm of love,
Beat down her guard of honour all before me,
Surfeit on joys, till even desire grow sick;
Then by long absence liberty regain,
And quite forget the pleasure and the pain.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* ACASTO'S *House.*

Enter ACASTO, CASTALIO, POLYDORE, *and* Attendants.

ACAST. To-day has been a day of glorious sport.
When you, Castalio, and your brother left me,
Forth from the thickets rushed another boar,
So large, he seemed the tyrant of the woods,
With all his dreadful bristles raised up high,
They seemed a grove of spears upon his back;
Foaming he came at me, where I was posted,
Best to observe which way he'd lead the chase,
Whetting his huge long tusks, and gaping wide,
As if he already had me for his prey;
Till, brandishing my well-poised javelin high,
With this bold executing arm, I struck
The ugly brindled monster to the heart.

Cast. The actions of your life were always wondrous.

Acast. No flattery, boy! an honest man can't live
It is a little sneaking art, which knaves [by't:
Use to cajole and soften fools withal;
If thou hast flattery in thy nature, out with't,
Or send it to a court; for there 'twill thrive.

Pol. Why there?

Acast. 'Tis, next to money, current there;
To be seen daily in as many forms
As there are sorts of vanities, and men:
The supercilious[1] statesman has his sneer
To smooth a poor man off with, that can't bribe him;
The grave dull fellow of small business soothes
The humourist, and will needs admire his wit.
Who without spleen could see a hot-brained atheist
Thanking a surly doctor for his sermon?
Or a grave counsellor meet a smooth young lord,
Squeeze him by the hand, and praise his good complexion?

Pol. Courts are the places where best manners flourish;
Where the deserving ought to rise, and fools
Make show. Why should I vex and chafe my spleen,
To see a gaudy coxcomb shine, when I
Have seen enough to soothe him in his follies,
And ride him to advantage as I please?

Acast. Who merit ought indeed to rise i' the world;
But no wise man that's honest should expect.
What man of sense would rack his generous mind,
To practise all the base formalities
And forms of business, force a grave starched face,
When he's a very libertine in's heart?
Seem not to know this or that man in public,
When privately perhaps they meet together,
And lay the scene of some brave fellow's ruin?
Such things are done—

Cast. Your lordship's wrongs have been
So great, that you with justice may complain;
But suffer us, whose younger minds ne'er felt
Fortune's deceits, to court her as she's fair.
Were she a common mistress, kind to all,
Her worth would cease, and half the world grow idle.

[1] "Superstitious" in old edition, but evidently a misprint.

Acast. Go to, you're fools, and know me not; I've learnt
Long since to bear revenge, or scorn my wrongs,
According to the value of the doer.
You both would fain be great, and to that end
Desire to do things worthy your ambition:
Go to the camp, preferment's noblest mart,
Where honour ought to have the fairest play,
You'll find
Corruption, envy, discontent, and faction,
Almost in every band: how many men
Have spent their blood in their dear country's service,
Yet now pine under want, while selfish slaves,
That even would cut their throats whom now they fawn on,
Like deadly locusts, eat the honey up,
Which those industrious bees so hardly toiled for!

Cast. These precepts suit not with my active mind:
Methinks I would be busy.

Pol. So would I.
Not loiter out my life at home, and know
No farther than one prospect gives me leave.

Acast. Busy your minds then, study arts and men:
Learn how to value merit though in rags,
And scorn a proud ill-mannered knave in office.

Enter SERINA, MONIMIA, *and* FLORELLA.

Ser. My lord, my father!

Acast. Blessings on my child,
My little cherub! what hast thou to ask me?

Ser. I bring you, sir, most glad and welcome news:
The young Chamont, whom you've so often wished
Is just arrived and entering. [for,

Acast. By my soul,
And all my honours, he's most dearly welcome;
Let me receive him like his father's friend.

Enter CHAMONT.

Welcome, thou relict of the best-loved man!
Welcome from all the turmoils, and the hazards
Of certain danger, and uncertain fortune!
Welcome as happy tidings after fears!

Cham. Words would but wrong the gratitude I owe
Should I begin to speak, my soul's so full [you.
That I should talk of nothing else all day.

Mon. My brother!

Cham. Oh my sister! let me hold thee
Long in my arms. I've not beheld thy face
These many days; by night I've often seen thee
In gentle dreams, and satisfied my soul
With fancied joy, till morning cares awaked me.—
Another sister! sure it must be so;
Though, I remember well, I had but one:
But I feel something in my heart that prompts
And tells me she has claim and interest there.

Acast. Young soldier, you've not only studied war;
Courtship, I see, has been your practice too,
And may not prove unwelcome to my daughter.

Cham. Is she your daughter? then my heart told
And I'm at least her brother by adoption; [true!
For you have made yourself to me a father,
And by that patent I have leave to love her.

Ser. Monimia, thou hast told me men are false,
Will flatter, feign, and make an art of love:
Is Chamont so? No, sure he's more than man,
Something that's near divine, and truth dwells in him.

Acast. Thus happy, who would envy pompous
The luxury of courts, or wealth of cities? [power,
Let there be joy through all the house this day;
In every room let plenty flow at large;
It is the birth-day of my royal master.
You have not visited the court, Chamont,
Since your return?

Cham. I have no business there;

I have not slavish temperance enough
To attend a favourite's heels, and watch his smiles;
Bear an ill office done me to my face,
And thank the lord that wronged me for his favour.

Acast. This you could do.

[*To* CASTALIO *and* POLYDORE.

Cast. I'd serve my prince.

Acast. Who'd serve him?

Cast. I would, my lord.

Pol. And I; both would.

Acast. Away!
He needs not any servants such as you.
Serve him! he merits more than man can do:
He is so good, praise cannot speak his worth;
So merciful, sure he ne'er slept in wrath;
So just, that were he but a private man,
He could not do a wrong. How would you serve him?

Cast. I'd serve him with my fortune here at home,
And serve him with my person in his wars;
Watch for him, fight for him, bleed for him.

Pol. Die for him,
As every true-born loyal subject ought.

Acast. Let me embrace you both. Now, by the souls
Of my brave ancestors, I'm truly happy;
For this be ever blest my marriage-day,
Blest be your mother's memory that bore you,
And doubly blest be that auspicious hour
That gave ye birth! Yes, my aspiring boys,
Ye shall have business, when your master wants you:
You cannot serve a nobler: I have served him;
In this old body yet the marks remain
Of many wounds. I've with this tongue proclaimed
His right, even in the face of rank rebellion;
And when a foul-mouthed traitor once profaned
His sacred name, with my good sabre drawn,
Even at the head of all his giddy rout,
I rushed, and clove the rebel to the chine.

Enter Servant.

Ser. My lord, the expected guests are just arrived.

Acast. Go you, and give them welcome and reception.

[*Exeunt* CASTALIO, POLYDORE, SERINA, FLORELLA, *and* Servant.

Cham. My lord, I stand in need of your assistance
In something that concerns my peace and honour.

Acast. Spoke like the son of that brave man I loved;
So freely, friendly we conversed together.
Whate'er it be, with confidence impart it;
Thou shalt command my fortune and my sword.

Cham. I dare not doubt your friendship nor your justice.
Your bounty shown to what I hold most dear,
My orphan sister, must not be forgotten.

Acast. Pr'ythee, no more of that: it grates my nature.

Cham. When our dear parents died, they died together,
One fate surprised them, and one grave received them:
My father with his dying breath bequeathed
Her to my love: my mother, as she lay
Languishing by him, called me to her side,
Took me in her fainting arms, wept, and embraced me;
Then pressed me close, and as she observed my tears,
Kissed them away: said she, "Chamont, my son,
By this, and all the love I ever showed thee,
Be careful of Monimia; watch her youth;
Let not her wants betray her to dishonour;
Perhaps kind Heaven may raise some friend": then sighed,
Kissed me again, so blessed us, and expired.
Pardon my grief.

Acast. It speaks an honest nature.

Cham. The friend Heaven raised was you; you took her up,

An infant, to the desert world exposed,
And proved another parent.
Acast. I've not wronged her!
Cham. Far be it from my fears.
Acast. Then why this argument?
Cham. My lord, my nature's jealous, and you'll [bear it.
Acast. Go on.
Cham. Great spirits bear misfortunes hardly:
Good offices claim gratitude; and pride,
Where power is wanting, will usurp a little,
And make us, rather than be thought behind-hand,
Pay over-price.
Acast. I cannot guess your drift:
Distrust you me?
Cham. No, but I fear her weakness
May make her pay a debt at any rate;
And, to deal freely with your lordship's goodness,
I've heard a story lately much disturbs me. [found
Acast. Then first charge her; and if the offence be
Within my reach, though it should touch my nature,
In my own offspring, by the dear remembrance
Of thy brave father, whom my heart rejoiced in,
I'd prosecute it with severest vengeance. [*Exit.*
Cham. I thank you from my soul.
Mon. Alas! my brother,
What have I done? and why do you abuse me?
My heart quakes in me; in your settled face
And clouded brow, methinks I see my fate:
You will not kill me!
Cham. Pr'ythee, why dost talk so?
Mon. Look kindly on me, then: I cannot bear
Severity; it daunts, and does amaze me:
My heart's so tender, should you charge me rough,
I should but weep, and answer you with sobbing.
But use me gently, like a loving brother,
And search through all the secrets of my soul.
Cham. Fear nothing, I will show myself a brother,

A tender, honest, and a loving brother.
You've not forgot our father?
Mon. I shall never.
Cham. Then you'll remember too, he was a man
That lived up to the standard of his honour,
And prized that jewel more than mines of wealth:
He'd not have done a shameful thing but once;
Though kept in darkness from the world, and hidden,
He could not have forgiven it to himself.
This was the only portion that he left us;
And I more glory in't than if possessed
Of all that ever fortune threw on fools.
'Twas a large trust, and must be managed nicely.
Now if, by any chance, Monimia,
You've soiled this gem, and taken from its value,
How will you account with me?
Mon. I challenge envy,
Malice, and all the practices of hell,
To censure all the actions of my past
Unhappy life, and taint me if they can!
Cham. I'll tell thee then: three nights ago, as I
Lay musing in my bed, all darkness round me,
A sudden damp struck to my heart, cold sweat
Dewed all my face, and trembling seized my limbs:
My bed shook under me, the curtains started,
And to my tortured fancy there appeared
The form of thee, thus beauteous as thou art;
Thy garments flowing loose, and in each hand
A wanton lover, which by turns caressed thee
With all the freedom of unbounded pleasure:
I snatched my sword, and in the very moment
Darted it at the phantom; straight it left me;
Then rose and called for lights; when, O dire omen!
I found my weapon had the arras pierced,
Just where that famous tale was interwoven,
How the unhappy Theban[1] slew his father.

[1] Œdipus.

Mon. And for this cause my virtue is suspected!
Because in dreams your fancy has been ridden,
I must be tortured waking!

Cham. Have a care;
Labour not to be justified too fast:
Hear all, and then let Justice hold the scale.
What followed was the riddle that confounds me:
Through a close lane as I pursued my journey,
And meditated on the last night's vision,
I spied a wrinkled hag, with age grown double,
Picking dry sticks and mumbling to herself;
Her eyes with scalding rheum were galled and red;
Cold palsy shook her head, her hands seemed withered,
And on her crooked shoulders had she wrapped
The tattered remnant of an old striped hanging,
Which served to keep her carcass from the cold;
So there was nothing of a piece about her:
Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patched
With different-coloured rags, black, red, white, yellow,
And seemed to speak variety of wretchedness.
I asked her of my way, which she informed me;
Then craved my charity, and bade me hasten
To save a sister:—at that word I started.

Mon. The common cheat of beggars every day;
They flock about our doors, pretend to gifts
Of prophecy, and telling fools their fortunes.

Cham. Oh! but she told me such a tale, Monimia,
As in it bore great circumstance of truth:—
Castalio and Polydore, my sister—

Mon. Ha!

Cham. What, altered! does your courage fail you?
Now, by my father's soul, the witch was honest;
Answer me, if thou hast not lost to them
Thy honour at a sordid game?

Mon. I will,
I must; so hardly my misfortune loads me.
That both have offered me their loves, most true.

Cham. And 'tis as true too, they have both undone
Mon. Though they both with earnest vows [thee.
Have pressed my heart, if e'er in thought I yielded
To any but Castalio—
Cham. But Castalio?
Mon. Still will you cross the line of my discourse?
Yes, I confess that he has won my soul
By generous love, and honourable vows:
Which he this day appointed to complete,
And make himself by holy marriage mine.
Cham. Art thou then spotless? hast thou still preserved
Thy virtue white, without a blot, untainted?
Mon. When I'm unchaste, may Heaven reject my prayers!
Or, more to make me wretched, may you know it!
Cham. Oh, then, Monimia, art thou dearer to me
Than all the comforts ever yet blessed man.
But let not marriage bait thee to thy ruin.
Trust not a man; we are by nature false,
Dissembling, subtle, cruel, and unconstant:
When a man talks of love, with caution trust him;
But if he swears, he'll certainly deceive thee.
I charge thee let no more Castalio soothe thee:
Avoid it as thou wouldst preserve the peace
Of a poor brother, to whose soul thou'rt precious.
Mon. I will. [ones
Cham. Appear as cold, when next you meet, as great
When merit begs; then shalt thou see how soon
His heart will cool, and all his pains grow easy. [*Exit.*
Mon. Yes, I will try him, torture him severely;
For, O Castalio! thou too much hast wronged me,
In leaving me to Polydore's ill usage.
He comes; and now, for once, O Love, stand neuter,
Whilst a hard part's performed! for I must tempt,
Wound his soft nature, though my heart aches for it.
[*Exit.*

Re-enter CASTALIO.

Cast. Monimia, Monimia !—She's gone ;
And seemed to part with anger in her eyes :
I am a fool ; and she has found my weakness ;
She uses me already like a slave
Fast bound in chains, to be chastised at will.
'Twas not well done to trifle with my brother :
I might have trusted him with all the secret,
Opened my silly heart, and shown it bare.
But then he loves her too ;—but not like me.
I am a doting, honest slave, designed
For bondage, marriage-bonds, which I have sworn
To wear. It is the only thing I e'er
Hid from his knowledge ; and he'll sure forgive
The first transgression of a wretched friend,
Betrayed to love, and all its little follies.

Re-enter POLYDORE *and* Page *at the Door.*

Pol. Here place yourself, and watch my brother throughly :
If he should chance to meet Monimia, make
Just observation of each word and action ;
Pass not one circumstance without remark :
Sir, 'tis your office ; do't, and bring me word. [*Exit.*

Re-enter MONIMIA.

Cast. Monimia, my angel ! 'twas not kind
To leave me like a turtle here alone,
To droop and mourn the absence of my mate.
When thou art from me, every place is desert,
And I, methinks, am savage and forlorn :
Thy presence only 'tis can make me blest,
Heal my unquiet mind, and tune my soul.

Mon. Oh, the bewitching tongues of faithless men !
'Tis thus the false hyæna makes her moan,
To draw the pitying traveller to her den :

Your sex are so, such false dissemblers all;
With sighs and plaints ye entice poor women's hearts,
And all that pity you are made your prey.
Cast. What means my love? Oh, how have I deserved
This language from the sovereign of my joys!
Stop, stop those tears, Monimia, for they fall
Like baneful dew from a distempered sky;
I feel them chill me to the very heart.
Mon. Oh, you are false, Castalio, most forsworn.
Attempt no farther to delude my faith;
My heart is fixed, and you shall shake't no more.
Cast. Who told you so? what hell-bred villain durst
Profane the sacred business of my love?
Mon. Your brother, knowing on what terms I'm here,
The unhappy object of your father's charity,
Licentiously discoursed to me of love,
And durst affront me with his brutal passion.
Cast. 'Tis I have been to blame, and only I;
False to my brother, and unjust to thee.
For, oh! he loves thee too, and this day owned it;
Taxed me with mine, and claimed a right above me.
Mon. And was your love so very tame, to shrink,
Or, rather than lose him, abandon me?
Cast. I, knowing him precipitate and rash,
To calm his heat, and to conceal my happiness,
Seemed to comply with his unruly will;
Talked as he talked, and granted all he asked;
Lest he in rage might have our loves betrayed,
And I for ever had Monimia lost.
Mon. Could you then? did you? can you own it too?
'Twas poorly done, unworthy of yourself,
And I can never think you meant me fair.

Cast. Is this Monimia? surely no; till now
I ever thought her dove-like, soft, and kind.
Who trusts his heart with woman's surely lost:
You were made fair on purpose to undo us,
Whilst greedily we snatch the alluring bait,
And ne'er distrust the poison that it hides.

Mon. When love ill-placed would find a means to break—

Cast. It never wants pretences or excuse.

Mon. Man therefore was a lord-like creature made,
Rough as the winds, and as inconstant too;
A lofty aspect given him for command,
Easily softened, when he would betray.
Like conquering tyrants, you our breasts invade,
Where you are pleased to forage for a while;
But soon you find new conquests out, and leave
The ravaged province ruinate and waste.
If so, Castalio, you have served my heart,
I find that desolation's settled there,
And I shall ne'er recover peace again.

Cast. Who can hear this, and bear an equal mind!
Since you will drive me from you, I must go;
But O, Monimia, when thou'st banished me,
No creeping slave, though tractable and dull
As artful woman for her ends would choose,
Shall ever dote as I have done: for oh!
No tongue my pleasure nor my pain can tell;
'Tis Heaven to have thee, and without thee hell.

Mon. Castalio! stay! we must not part. I find
My rage ebbs out, and love flows in apace.
These little quarrels love must needs forgive;
They rouse up drowsy thoughts, and wake the soul.
Oh! charm me with the music of thy tongue;
I'm ne'er so blest as when I hear thy vows,
And listen to the language of thy heart.

Cast. Where am I? surely paradise is round me!
Sweets planted by the hand of Heaven grow here,
And every sense is full of thy perfection.
To hear thee speak might calm a madman's frenzy,
Till by attention he forgot his sorrows;
But to behold thy eyes, thy amazing beauties,
Might make him rage again with love, as I do.
To touch thee's Heaven; but to enjoy thee, oh!
Thou Nature's whole perfection in one piece!
Sure, framing thee Heaven took unusual care;
As its own beauty it designed thee fair;
And formed thee by the best-loved angel there.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*The Garden before* ACASTO'S *House.*

Enter POLYDORE *and* Page.

POL. Were they so kind? Express it to me all
In words, 'twill make me think I saw it too.

Page. At first I thought they had been mortal foes; [turbed;
Monimia raged, Castalio grew dis-
Each thought the other wronged, yet both so haughty,
They scorned submission, though love all the while
The rebel played, and scarce could be contained.

Pol. But what succeeded?

Page. Oh, 'twas wondrous pretty!
For of a sudden all the storm was past,
A gentle calm of love succeeded it;
Monimia sighed and blushed, Castalio swore;
As you, my lord, I well remember, did
To my young sister in the orange grove,
When I was first preferred to be your page.

Pol. Happy Castalio! now by my great soul,
My ambitious soul, that languishes to glory,
I'll have her yet; by my best hopes, I will.
She shall be mine, in spite of all her arts.
But for Castalio why was I refused?

Has he supplanted me by some foul play?
Traduced my honour? death! he durst not do't.
It must be so: we parted, and he met her,
Half to compliance brought by me; surprised
Her sinking virtue, till she yielded quite.
So poachers basely pick up tired game,
Whilst the fair hunter's cheated of his prey.
Boy!

Page. My lord!

Pol. Go to your chamber, and prepare your lute;
Find out some song to please me, that describes
Women's hypocrisies, their subtle wiles,
Betraying smiles, feigned tears, inconstancies;
Their painted outsides and corrupted minds;
The sum of all their follies, and their falsehoods.

[*Exit* Page.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Oh, the unhappiest tidings tongue e'er told!

Pol. The matter?

Serv. Oh! your father, my good master,
As with his guests he sat in mirth raised high,
And chased the goblet round the joyful board,
A sudden trembling seized on all his limbs;
His eyes distorted grew; his visage pale;
His speech forsook him; life itself seemed fled;
And all his friends are waiting now about him.

Enter ACASTO *leaning on two* Attendants.

Acast. Support me, give me air; I'll yet recover:
'Twas but a slip decaying Nature made,
For she grows weary near her journey's end.
Where are my sons? Come near, my Polydore:
Your brother! where's Castalio?

Serv. My lord,
I've searched, as you commanded, all the house:
He and Monimia are not to be found.

Acast. Not to be found! then where are all my friends?
Tis well;—
I hope they'll pardon an unhappy fault
My unmannerly infirmity has made.
Death could not come in a more welcome hour,
For I'm prepared to meet him; and, methinks,
Would live and die with all my friends about me.

Enter CASTALIO.

Cast. Angels preserve my dearest father's life;
Bless it with long, uninterrupted days!
Oh! may he live till time itself decay;
Till good men wish him dead, or I offend him!

Acast. Thank you, Castalio; give me both your hands,
And bear me up; I'd walk. So, now, methinks,
I appear as great as Hercules himself,
Supported by the pillars he had raised.

Cast. My lord, your chaplain.

Acast. Let the good man enter.

Enter Chaplain.

Chap. Heaven guard your lordship, and restore your health!

Acast. I have provided for thee if I die.
No fawning! 'tis a scandal to thy office.
My sons, as thus, united, ever live;
And for the estate, you'll find, when I am dead,
I have divided it betwixt you both,
Equally parted, as you shared my love;
Only to sweet Monimia I've bequeathed
Ten thousand crowns; a little portion for her,
To wed her honourably as she's born.
Be not less friends because you're brothers; shun
The man that's singular,—his mind's unsound,
His spleen o'erweighs his brains; but, above all,
Avoid the politic, the factious fool,
The busy, buzzing, talking, hardened knave,

The quaint smooth rogue, that sins against his reason;
Calls saucy loud suspicion public zeal,
And mutiny the dictates of his spirit:
Be very careful how ye make new friends.
Men read not morals now; it was a custom:
But all are to their fathers' vices born,
And in their mothers' ignorance are bred.
Let marriage be the last mad thing ye do,
For all the sins and follies of the past.
If you have children, never give them knowledge;
'Twill spoil their fortune; fools are all the fashion.
If you've religion, keep it to yourselves;
Atheists will else make use of toleration,
And laugh you out on't: never show religion,
Except ye mean to pass for knaves of conscience,
And cheat believing fools that think ye honest.

Enter SERINA.

Ser. My father!
Acast. My heart's darling!
Ser. Let my knees
Fix to the earth; ne'er let my eyes have rest,
But wake and weep, till Heaven restore my father!
Acast. Rise to my arms, and thy kind prayers are answered,
For thou'rt a wondrous extract of all goodness,
Born for my joy, and no pain's felt when near thee.

Enter CHAMONT.

Chamont!
Cham. My lord, may't prove not an unlucky omen!
Many I see are waiting round about you,
And I am come to ask a blessing too.
Acast. Mayst thou be happy!
Cham. Where?
Acast. In all thy wishes.
Cham. Confirm me so, and make this fair one mine.

I am unpractised in the trade of courtship,
And know not how to deal love out with art:
Onsets in love seem best like those in war,
Fierce, resolute, and done with all the force;
So I would open my whole heart at once,
And pour out the abundance of my soul.

Acast. What says Serina? Canst thou love a soldier?
One born to honour, and to honour bred?
One that has learnt to treat even foes with kindness;
To wrong no good man's fame, nor praise himself?

Ser. Oh, name not love, for that's allied to joy;
And joy must be a stranger to my heart,
When you're in danger. May Chamont's good fortune
Render him lovely to some happier maid!
Whilst I at friendly distance see him blest,
Praise the kind gods, and wonder at his virtues.

Acast. Chamont, pursue her, conquer and possess her;
And, as my son, a third of all my fortune
Shall be thy lot.
But keep thy eyes from wandering, man of frailty:
Beware the dangerous beauty of the wanton;
Shun their enticements; ruin, like a vulture,
Waits on their conquests: falsehood too's their business;
They put[1] false beauty off to all the world;
Use false endearments to the fools that love 'em;
And, when they marry, to their silly husbands
They bring false virtue, broken fame and fortune.

Ser. Hear ye that, my lord?

Cham. Yes, my fair monitor, old men always talk thus.

Acast. Chamont, you told me of some doubts that pressed you.
Are you yet satisfied that I'm your friend?

Cham. My lord, I would not lose that satisfaction
For any blessing I could wish for.

[1] *i.e.* Palm off false beauty.

As to my fears, already I have lost them;
They ne'er shall vex me more, nor trouble you.
Acast. I thank you. Daughter, you must do so too.
My friends, 'tis late;
For my disorder, it seems all past and over,
And I methinks begin to feel new health.
Cast. Would you but rest, it might restore you quite.
Acast. Yes, I'll to bed; old men must humour weakness.
Let me have music then, to lull and chase
This melancholy thought of death away.
Good-night, my friends! Heaven guard ye all!
To-morrow early we'll salute the day, [Good-night!
Find out new pleasures, and redeem lost time.
[*Exeunt all but* CHAMONT *and* Chaplain.
Cham. Hist, hist, Sir Gravity, a word with you.
Chap. With me, sir?
Cham. If you're at leisure, sir, we'll waste an hour;
'Tis yet too soon to sleep, and 'twill be charity
To lend your conversation to a stranger.
Chap. Sir, you're a soldier?
Cham. Yes.
Chap. I love a soldier;
And had been one myself, but my parents would make me what you see me: yet I'm honest, for all I wear black.
Cham. And that's a wonder.
Have you had long dependence on this family?
Chap. I have not thought it so, because my time's Spent pleasantly. My lord's not haughty nor imperious,
Nor I gravely whimsical; he has good nature,
And I have manners:
His sons too are civil to me, because I do not pretend to be wiser than they are; I meddle with no man's business but my own; I rise in a morning early, study moderately, eat and drink cheerfully, live

soberly, take my innocent pleasures freely; so meet with respect, and am not the jest of the family.

Cham. I'm glad you are so happy.—
A pleasant fellow this, and may be useful. [*Aside.*
Knew you my father, the old Chamont?

Chap. I did, and was most sorry when we lost him.

Cham. Why? didst thou love him?

Chap. Everybody loved him; besides, he was my master's friend.

Cham. I could embrace thee for that very notion.
If thou didst love my father, I could think
Thou wouldst not be an enemy to me.

Chap. I can be no man's foe.

Cham. Then pr'ythee tell me,
Think'st thou the Lord Castalio loves my sister?
Nay, never start. Come, come, I know thy office
Opens thee all the secrets of the family.
Then, if thou'rt honest, use this freedom kindly.

Chap. Loves your sister!

Cham. Ay, loves her.

Chap. Sir, I never asked him; and wonder you should ask it me.

Cham. Nay, but thou'rt an hypocrite; is there not
Of all thy tribe that's honest in your schools? [one
The pride of your superiors makes ye slaves:
Ye all live loathsome, sneaking, servile lives;
Not free enough to practise generous truth,
Though ye pretend to teach it to the world.

Chap. I would deserve a better thought from you.

Cham. If thou wouldst have me not contemn thy
And character, think all thy brethren knaves, [office
Thy trade a cheat, and thou its worst professor,
Inform me; for I tell thee, priest, I'll know.

Chap. Either he loves her, or he much has wronged her.

Cham. How, wronged her! have a care; for this may lay

A scene of mischief to undo us all.
But tell me—wronged her, saidst thou?
Chap. Ay, sir, wronged her.
Cham. This is a secret worth a monarch's fortune:
What shall I give thee for't? thou dear physician
Of sickly souls, unfold this riddle to me,
And comfort mine—
Chap. I would hide nothing from you willingly.
Cham. Nay, then again thou'rt honest. Wouldst thou tell me?
Chap. Yes, if I durst.
Cham. Why, what affrights thee?
Chap. You do,
Who are not to be trusted with the secret.
Cham. Why, I am no fool.
Chap. So, indeed, you say.
Cham. Pr'ythee, be serious then.
Chap. You see I am so,
And hardly shall be mad enough to-night
To trust you with my ruin.
Cham. Art thou then
So far concerned in't? What has been thy office?
Curse on that formal steady villain's face!
Just so do all bawds look; nay, bawds, they say,
Can pray upon occasion, talk of Heaven,
Turn up their goggling eye-balls, rail at vice,
Dissemble, lie, and preach like any priest.
Art thou a bawd?
Chap. Sir, I'm not often used thus.
Cham. Be just then.
Chap. So I shall be to the trust
That's laid upon me.
Cham. By the reverenced soul
Of that great honest man that gave me being,
Tell me but what thou know'st concerns my honour,
And if I e'er reveal it to thy wrong,
May this good sword ne'er do me right in battle!

May I ne'er know that blessed peace of mind,
That dwells in good and pious men, like thee!
Chap. I see your temper's moved, and I will trust you.
Cham. Wilt thou?
Chap. I will; but if it ever 'scape you—
Cham. It never shall.
Chap. Swear then.
Cham. I do, by all
That's dear to me, by the honour of my name,
And by that Power I serve, it never shall.
Chap. Then this good day, when all the house was busy,
When mirth and kind rejoicing filled each room,
As I was walking in the grove I met them.
Cham. What, met them in the grove together? tell me,
How? walking, standing, sitting, lying? ha!
Chap. I, by their own appointment, met them there;
Received their marriage-vows, and joined their hands.
Cham. How! married!
Chap. Yes, sir.
Cham. Then my soul's at peace:
But why would you delay so long to give it?
Chap. Not knowing what reception it may find
With old Acasto; may be I was too cautious
To trust the secret from me.
Cham. What's the cause
I cannot guess: though 'tis my sister's honour,
I do not like this marriage,
Huddled i' the dark, and done at too much venture:
The business looks with an unlucky face.
Keep still the secret; for it ne'er shall 'scape me,
Not even to them, the new-matched pair. Farewell.
Believe my truth, and know me for thy friend.
[*Exeunt.*

Re-enter CASTALIO *and* MONIMIA.

Cast. Young Chamont, and the chaplain! sure 'tis they!
No matter what's contrived, or who consulted,

Since my Monimia's mine; though this sad look
Seems no good-boding omen to her bliss;
Else, pr'ythee, tell me why that look cast down?
Why that sad sigh, as if thy heart were breaking?

Mon. Castalio, I am thinking what we've done.
The heavenly powers were sure displeased to-day;
For at the ceremony as we stood,
And as your hand was kindly joined with mine,
As the good priest pronounced the sacred words,
Passion grew big, and I could not forbear;
Tears drowned my eyes, and trembling seized my soul.
What should that mean?

Cast. Oh, thou art tender all;
Gentle and kind as sympathising nature!
When a sad story has been told, I've seen
Thy little breasts, with soft compassion swelled,
Shove up and down, and heave like dying birds:
But now let fear be banished, think no more
Of danger, for there's safety in my arms;
Let them receive thee: Heaven, grow jealous now!
Sure she's too good for any mortal creature;
I could grow wild, and praise thee even to madness.
But wherefore do I dally with my bliss?
The night's far spent, and day draws on apace;
To bed, my love, and wake till I come thither.

Re-enter POLYDORE, *behind.*

Pol. So hot, my brother? [*Aside.*

Mon. 'Twill be impossible:
You know your father's chamber's next to mine,
And the least noise will certainly alarm him.

Cast. Impossible! impossible! alas!
Is't possible to live one hour without thee?
Let me behold those eyes, they'll tell me truth.
Hast thou no longing? Art thou still the same
Cold, icy virgin? No; thou'rt altered quite.
Haste, haste to bed, and let loose all thy wishes.

Mon. 'Tis but one night, my lord; I pray be ruled.
Cast. Try if thou'st power to stop a flowing tide,
Or in a tempest make the seas be calm;
And, when that's done, I'll conquer my desires.
No more, my blessing. What shall be the sign?
When shall I come? for to my joys I'll steal,
As if I ne'er had paid my freedom for them.
Mon. Just three soft strokes upon the chamber-door;
And at that signal you shall gain admittance:
But speak not the least word; for if you should,
'Tis surely heard, and all will be betrayed.
Cast. Oh! doubt it not, Monimia; our joys
Shall be as silent as the ecstatic bliss
Of souls that by intelligence converse:
Immortal pleasures shall our senses drown;
Thought shall be lost, and every power dissolved:
Away, my love! first take this kiss. Now haste.
I long for that to come, yet grudge each minute past.
[*Exit* MONIMIA.
My brother wandering too so late this way!
Pol. [*Coming forward*]. Castalio!
Cast. My Polydore, how dost thou?
How does our father; is he well recovered?
Pol. I left him happily reposed to rest;
He's still as gay as if his life were young.
But how does fair Monimia?
Cast. Doubtless well.
A cruel beauty with her conquests pleased
Is always joyful, and her mind in health.
Pol. Is she the same Monimia still she was?
May we not hope she's made of mortal mould?
Cast. She's not woman else:
Though I'm grown weary of this tedious hoping;
We've in a barren desert strayed too long.
Pol. Yet may relief be unexpected found,
And love's sweet manna cover all the field.
Met ye to-day?

Cast. No; she has still avoided me.
Her brother too is jealous of her grown,
And has been hinting something to my father.
I wish I'd never meddled with the matter;
And would enjoin thee, Polydore—
Pol. To what?
Cast. To leave this peevish beauty to herself.
Pol. What, quit my love? as soon I'd quit my post
In fight, and like a coward run away.
No, by my stars! I'll chase her till she yields
To me, or meets her rescue in another.
Cast. Nay, she has beauty that might shake the leagues
Of mighty kings, and set the world at odds;
But I have wondrous reasons on my side
That would persuade thee, were they known.
Pol. Then speak them.
What are they? came ye to her window here
To learn them now? Castalio, have a care;
Use honest dealing with your friend and brother.
Believe me, I'm not with my love so blinded,
But can discern your purpose to abuse me.
Quit your pretences to her.
Cast. Grant I do;
You love capitulation, Polydore,
And but upon conditions would oblige me.
Pol. You say, you've reasons; why are they concealed?
Cast. To-morrow I may tell you:
It is a matter of such circumstance,
As I must well consult ere I reveal.
But, pr'ythee, cease to think I would abuse thee,
Till more be known.
Pol. When you, Castalio, cease
To meet Monimia unknown to me,
And then deny it slavishly, I'll cease

To think Castalio faithless to his friend.
Did I not see you part this very moment?

Cast. It seems you've watched me then?

Pol. I scorn the office.

Cast. Pr'ythee avoid a thing thou mayst repent.

Pol. That is, henceforward making leagues with you.

Cast. Nay, if you're angry, Polydore, good night.

[*Exit.*

Pol. Good-night, Castalio, if you're in such haste.
He little thinks I've overheard the appointment,
But to his chamber's gone to wait awhile,
Then come and take possession of my love.
This is the utmost point of all my hopes;
Or now she must or never can be mine.
Oh, for a means now how to counterplot,
And disappoint this happy elder brother!
In every thing we do or undertake,
He soars above me, mount what height I can,
And keeps the start he got of me in birth.
Cordelio!

Re-enter Page.

Page. My lord.

Pol. Come hither, boy.
Thou hast a pretty, forward, lying face,
And mayst in time expect preferment; canst thou
Pretend to secrecy, cajole and flatter
Thy master's follies, and assist his pleasures?

Page. My lord, I could do anything for you,
And ever be a very faithful boy.
Command, whate'er's your pleasure I'll observe,
Be it to run, or watch, or to convey
A letter to a beauteous lady's bosom:
At least I am not dull, and soon should learn.

Pol. 'Tis pity then thou shouldst not be employed.
Go to my brother; he's in's chamber now
Undressing, and preparing for his rest;

Find out some means to keep him up awhile
Tell him a pretty story that may please
His ear; invent a tale, no matter what;
If he should ask of me, tell him I'm gone
To bed, and sent you there to know his pleasure,
Whether he'll hunt to-morrow.—Well said, Polydore;
Dissemble with thy brother.—That's one point;
But do not leave him till he's in his bed:
Or if he chance to walk again this way,
Follow and do not quit him, but seem fond
To do him little offices of service.
Perhaps at last it may offend him; then
Retire, and wait till I come in. Away:
Succeed in this, and be employed again.

Page. Doubt not, my lord: he has been always kind
To me; would often set me on his knees;
Then give me sweetmeats, call me pretty boy,
And ask me what the maids talked of at nights.

Pol. Run quickly then, and prosperous be thy wishes! [*Exit* Page.
Here I'm alone, and fit for mischief; now
To cheat this brother, will't be honest that?
I heard the sign she ordered him to give.
O for the art of Proteus, but to change
The happy Polydore to blest Castalio!
She's not so well acquainted with him yet,
But I may fit her arms as well as he.
Then when I'm happily possessed of more
Than sense can think, all loosened into joy,
To hear my disappointed brother come,
And give the unregarded signal—oh,
What a malicious pleasure will that be!
"Just three soft strokes against the chamber-door:
But speak not the least word; for if you should,
'Tis surely heard, and we are both betrayed."
How I adore a mistress that contrives

With care to lay the business of her joys!
One that has wit to charm the very soul,
And give a double relish to delight!
Blest Heaven, assist me but in this dear hour,
And my kind stars be but propitious now,
Dispose of me hereafter as you please!
Monimia! Monimia! [*Gives the sign.*

Flor. [*At the window.*] Who's there?

Pol. 'Tis I.

Flor. My Lord Castalio?

Pol. The same.

How does my love, my dear Monimia?

Flor. Oh!

She wonders much at your unkind delay;
You've stayed so long, that at each little noise
The wind but makes, she asks if you are coming.

Pol. Tell her I'm here, and let the door be opened.
[FLORELLA *retires.*

Now boast, Castalio; triumph now, and tell
Thyself strange stories of a promised bliss!
[*The door is unbolted.*

It opens: ha! what means my trembling flesh?
Limbs, do your office and support me well;
Bear me to her, then fail me if you can. [*Exit.*

Re-enter CASTALIO *and* Page.

Page. Indeed, my lord, 'twill be a lovely morning;
Pray let us hunt.

Cast. Go, you're an idle prattler.
I'll stay at home to-morrow: if your lord
Thinks fit, he may command my hounds. Go, leave me;
I must to bed.

Page. I'll wait upon your lordship,
If you think fit, and sing you to repose.

Cast. No, my kind boy, the night is too far wasted;
My senses too are quite disrobed of thought,

And ready all with me to go to rest.
Good-night: commend me to my brother.

Page. Oh! you never heard the last new song I learnt; it is the finest, prettiest song indeed, of my lord and my lady you know who, that were caught together, you know where. My lord, indeed, it is.

Cast. You must be whipped, youngster, if you get such songs as those are. What means this boy's impertinence to-night?

Page. Why, what must I sing, pray, my dear lord?

Cast. Psalms, child, psalms.

Page. Oh dear me! boys that go to school learn psalms; but pages, that are better bred, sing lampoons.

Cast. Well, leave me; I'm weary.

Page. Oh! but you promised me, last time I told you what colour my Lady Monimia's stockings were of, and that she gartered them above the knee, that you would give me a little horse to go a-hunting upon; so you did. I'll tell you no more stories, except you keep your word with me.

Cast. Well, go, you trifler, and to-morrow ask me.

Page. Indeed, my lord, I can't abide to leave you.

Cast. Why, wert thou instructed to attend me?

Page. No, no, indeed, indeed, my lord, I was not; But I know what I know.

Cast. What dost thou know? Death! what can all this mean?

Page. Oh! I know who loves somebody.

Cast. What's that to me, boy?

Page. Nay, I know who loves you too.

Cast. That is a wonder; pr'ythee tell it me.

Page. That—'tis—I know who—but will you give me the horse then?

Cast. I will, my child.

Page. It is my Lady Monimia, look you; but don't

you tell her I told you: she'll give me no more playthings then. I heard her say so as she lay a-bed, man.

Cast. Talked she of me when in her bed, Cordelio?

Page. Yes, and I sung her the song you made too; and she did so sigh, and so look with her eyes, and her breasts did so lift up and down; I could have found in my heart to have beat them, for they made me ashamed.

Cast. Hark, what's that noise? Take this, begone, and leave me.
You knave, you little flatterer, get you gone.

[*Exit* Page.

Surely it was a noise. Hist!—only fancy;
For all is hushed, as Nature were retired,
And the perpetual motion standing still,
So much she from her work appears to cease,
And every warring element's at peace;
All the wild herds are in their coverts couched;
The fishes to their banks or ooze repaired,
And to the murmurs of the waters sleep;
The feeling air's at rest, and feels[1] no noise,
Except of some soft breaths among the trees,
Rocking the harmless birds that rest upon them.
'Tis now that, guided by my love, I go
To take possession of Monimia's arms.
Sure Polydore's by this time gone to bed.
At midnight thus the usurer steals untracked,
To make a visit to his hoarded gold,
And feast his eyes upon the shining mammon.

[*Knocks.*

She hears me not; sure she already sleeps;
Her wishes could not brook my long delay,
And her poor heart has beat itself to rest.

[*Knocks again*

Monimia! my angel—ha!—not yet—

[1] Hears.

How long's the shortest[1] moment of delay
To a heart impatient of its pangs, like mine,
In sight of ease, and panting to the goal!
Once more— [*Knocks again.*
Flor. [*At the window.*] Who's there,
That comes thus rudely to disturb our rest?
Cast. 'Tis I.
Flor. Who are you? what's your name?
Cast. Suppose
The Lord Castalio.
Flor. I know you not.
The Lord Castalio has no business here.
Cast. Ha! have a care; what can this mean? whoe'er
Thou art, I charge thee to Monimia fly;
Tell her I'm here, and wait upon my doom.
Flor. Whoe'er ye are, ye may repent this outrage;
My lady must not be disturbed. Good-night.
Cast. She must, tell her she shall; go, I'm in haste,
And bring her tidings from the State of Love;
They're all in consultation met together,
How to reward my truth, and crown her vows.
Flor. Sure the man's mad!
Cast. Or this will make me so.
Obey me, or, by all the wrongs I suffer,
I'll scale the window, and come in by force,
Let the sad consequence be what it will.—
This creature's trifling folly makes me mad.
Flor. My lady's answer is, you may depart;
She says she knows you: you are Polydore,
Sent by Castalio, as you were to-day,
To affront and do her violence again.
Cast. I'll not believe't.
Flor. You may, sir.
Cast. Curses blast thee!
Flor. Well, 'tis a fine cool evening; and I hope

[1] "Softest" in original edition.

May cure the raging fever in your blood.
Good-night. [*Retires.*

Cast. And farewell all that's just in woman!
This is contrived, a studied trick to abuse
My easy nature, and torment my mind;
Sure now she has bound me fast, and means to lord it,
To rein me hard, and ride me at her will,
Till by degrees she shape me into fool
For all her future uses. Death and torment!
'Tis impudence to think my soul will bear it.
Oh, I could grow even wild, and tear my hair
'Tis well, Monimia, that thy empire's short!
Let but to-morrow, but to-morrow come,
And try if all thy arts appease my wrong;
Till when, be this detested place my bed, [*Lies down.*
Where I will ruminate on woman's ills,
Laugh at myself, and curse the inconstant sex.
Faithless Monimia! O Monimia!

Enter ERNESTO.

Ern. Either
My sense has been deluded, or this way
I heard the sound of sorrow; 'tis late night,
And none whose mind's at peace would wander now.

Cast. Who's there?

Ern. A friend.

Cast. If thou art so, retire,
And leave this place; for I would be alone.

Ern. Castalio! My lord, why in this posture,
Stretched on the ground? Your honest, true, old servant,
Your poor Ernesto, cannot see you thus;
Rise, I beseech you.

Cast. If thou art Ernesto,
As by thy honesty thou seem'st to be,
Once leave me to my folly.

Ern. I can't leave you,

And not the reason know of your disorders.
Remember how, when young, I in my arms
Have often borne you, pleased you in your pleasures,
And sought an early share in your affection.
Do not discard me now, but let me serve you.

Cast. Thou canst not serve me.

Ern. Why?

Cast. Because my thoughts
Are full of woman; thou, poor wretch, art past them.

Ern. I hate the sex.

Cast. Then I'm thy friend, Ernesto. [*Rises.*
I'd leave the world for him that hates a woman.
Woman, the fountain of all human frailty!
What mighty ills have not been done by woman!
Who was't betrayed the Capitol? A woman.
Who lost Mark Antony the world? A woman.
Who was the cause of a long ten years' war,
And laid at last old Troy in ashes? Woman,
Destructive, damnable, deceitful woman!
Woman to man first as a blessing given,
When innocence and love were in their prime!
Happy awhile in Paradise they lay,
But quickly woman longed to go astray;
Some foolish new adventure needs must prove;
And the first devil she saw, she changed her love;
To his temptations lewdly she inclined
Her soul, and for an apple damned mankind. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* ACASTO'S *House.*

Enter ACASTO.

ACAST. Blest be the morning that has brought me health;
A happy rest has softened pain away,
And I'll forget it, though my mind's not well:
A heavy melancholy clogs my heart;
I droop and sigh, I know not why. Dark dreams,
Sick fancy's children, have been over-busy,
And all the night played farces in my brains.
Methought I heard the midnight raven cry;
Waked with the imagined noise, my curtains seemed
To start, and at my feet my sons appeared,
Like ghosts, all pale and stiff: I strove to speak,
But could not; suddenly the forms were lost,
And seemed to vanish in a bloody cloud.
'Twas odd, and for the present shook my thoughts;
But was the effect of my distempered blood;
And, when the health's disturbed, the mind's unruly.

Enter POLYDORE.

Good-morning, Polydore.

Pol. Heaven keep your lordship!

Acast. Have you yet seen Castalio to-day?

Pol. My lord, 'tis early day; he's hardly risen.

Acast. Go, call him up, and meet me in the chapel.
[*Exit* POLYDORE.

cannot think all has gone well to-night;
For as I waking lay (and sure my sense
Was then my own) methought I heard my son
Castalio's voice; but it seemed low and mournful;
Under my window too I thought I heard it:
My untoward fancy could not be deceived
In everything; and I will search the truth out.

Enter MONIMIA *and* FLORELLA.

Already up, Monimia! you rose
Thus early surely to outshine the day!
Or was there anything that crossed your rest? [sleep.
They were naughty thoughts that would not let you

Mon. Whatever are my thoughts, my lord, I've
By your example to correct their ills, [learnt
And morn and evening give up the account.

Acast. Your pardon, sweet one; I upbraid you not;
Or, if I would, you are so good I could not;
Though I'm deceived, or you're more fair to-day;
For beauty's heightened in your cheeks, and all
Your charms seem up and ready in your eyes.

Mon. The little share I have's so very mean
That it may easily admit addition;
Though you, my lord, should most of all beware
To give it too much praise, and make me proud.

Acast. Proud of an old man's praises! No, Monimia!
But if my prayers can do you any good,
Thou shalt not want the largest share of them.
Heard you no noise to-night?

Mon. Noise, my good lord!

Acast. Ay, about midnight?

Mon. Indeed, my lord, I don't remember any.

Acast. You must, sure! Went you early to your rest?

Mon. About the wonted hour.—Why this inquiry?
[*Aside.*

Acast. And went your maid to bed too?

Mon. My lord, I guess so:
I've seldom known her disobey my orders.

Acast. Sure goblins then, or fairies, haunt the dwelling!
I'll have inquiry made through all the house,
But I'll find out the cause of these disorders.
Good-day to thee, Monimia. I'll to chapel. [*Exit.*

Mon. I'll but dispatch some orders to my woman,
And wait upon your lordship there.
I fear the priest has played us false; if so,
My poor Castalio loses all for me.
I wonder, though, he made such haste to leave me;
Was't not unkind, Florella? surely 'twas!
He scarce afforded one kind parting word,
But went away so cold!—the kiss he gave me
Seemed the forced compliment of sated love.
Would I had never married!

Flor. Why?

Mon. Methinks
The scene's quite altered; I am not the same;
I've bound up for myself a weight of cares,
And how the burden will be borne, none knows.
A husband may be jealous, rigid, false;
And, should Castalio e'er prove so to me,
So tender is my heart, so nice my love,
'Twould ruin and distract my rest for ever.

Flor. Madam, he's coming.

Mon. Where, Florella? where?
Is he returning? To my chamber lead;
I'll meet him there: the mysteries of our love
Should be kept private as religious rites
From the unhallowed view of common eyes.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another Room in* ACASTO'S *House.*

Enter CASTALIO.

Cast. Wished morning's come! And now, upon the plains
And distant mountains, where they feed their flocks,
The happy shepherds leave their homely huts,
And with their pipes proclaim the new-born day.
The lusty swain comes with his well-filled scrip
Of healthful viands, which, when hunger calls,
With much content and appetite, he eats,
To follow in the fields his daily toil,
And dress the grateful glebe, that yields him fruits.
The beasts, that under the warm hedges slept,
And weathered out the cold bleak night, are up,
And, looking towards the neighbouring pastures, raise
The voice, and bid their fellow-brutes good-morrow
The cheerful birds too, on the tops of trees,
Assemble all in quires, and with their notes
Salute and welcome up the rising sun.
There's no condition sure so cursed as mine;
I'm married! 'Sdeath! I'm sped. How like a dog
Looked Hercules, thus to a distaff chained!
Monimia! O Monimia!

Enter MONIMIA *and* FLORELLA.

Mon. I come,
I fly to my adored Castalio's arms,
My wishes' lord. May every morn begin
Like this; and with our days our loves renew!
Now I may hope you're satisfied—
[*Looking languishingly on him.*

Cast. I am
Well satisfied—that thou art—Oh!—

Mon. What? speak.
Art thou not well, Castalio? Come, lean
Upon my breasts, and tell me where's thy pain.

Cast. 'Tis here; 'tis in my head; 'tis in my heart;
Tis everywhere; it rages like a madness;
And I most wonder how my reason holds!
Nay, wonder not, Monimia: the slave
You thought you had secured within my breast
Is grown a rebel, and has broke his chain,
And now he walks there like a lord at large.

Mon. Am I not then your wife, your loved Monimia?
I once was so, or I've most strangely dreamt.
What ails my love?

Cast. Whate'er thy dreams have been,
Thy waking thoughts ne'er meant Castalio well.
No more, Monimia, of your sex's arts,
They're useless all: I'm not that pliant tool,
That necessary utensil you'd make me:
I know my charter better—I am man,
Obstinate man, and will not be enslaved.

Mon. You shall not fear't: indeed my nature's easy;
I'll ever live your most obedient wife,
Nor ever any privilege pretend
Beyond your will; for that shall be my law;—
Indeed I will not.

Cast. Nay, you shall not, madam;
By yon bright Heaven, you shall not! All the day
I'll play the tyrant, and at night forsake thee;
Till by afflictions, and continued cares,
I've worn thee to a homely household drudge:
Nay, if I've any too, thou shalt be made
Subservient to all my looser pleasures;
For thou hast wronged Castalio.

Mon. No more:
Oh, kill me here, or tell me my offence;
I'll never quit you else, but on these knees
Thus follow you all day, till they're worn bare,
And hang upon you like a drowning creature.
Castalio!

Cast. Away! Last night, last night!

Mon. It was our wedding-night.
Cast. No more! forget it.
Mon. Why? do you then repent?
Cast. I do.
Mon. O Heaven!
And will you leave me thus? Help, help, Florella!
[*He drags her to the door, breaks from her, and exit.*
Help me to hold this yet loved cruel man.
Oh, my heart breaks—I'm dying! Oh—stand off!
I'll not indulge this woman's weakness; still,
Chafed and fomented, let my heart swell on,
Till with its injuries it burst, and shake,
With the dire blow, this prison to the earth.
Flor. What sad mistake has been the cause of this?
Mon. Castalio! Oh, how often has he swore
Nature should change, the sun and stars grow dark,
Ere he would falsify his vows to me!
Make haste, confusion, then! sun, lose thy light,
And stars, drop dead with sorrow to the earth!
For my Castalio's false.
Flor. Unhappy day!
Mon. False as the wind, the water, or the weather;
Cruel as tigers o'er their trembling prey:
I feel him in my breast, he tears my heart,
And at each sigh he drinks the gushing blood.
Must I be long in pain?

Enter CHAMONT.

Cham. In tears, Monimia?
Mon. Whoe'er thou art,
Leave me alone to my beloved despair.
Cham. Lift up thy eyes, and see who comes to cheer [thee.
Tell me the story of thy wrongs, and then
See if my soul has rest till thou hast justice.
Mon. My brother!
Cham. Yes, Monimia, if thou think'st
That I deserve the name, I am thy brother.

Mon. O Castalio!
Cham. Ha!
Name me that name again! My soul's on fire
Till I know all: there's meaning in that name.
I know he is thy husband; therefore trust me
With all the following truth—
Mon. Indeed, Chamont,
There's nothing in it but the fault of nature:
I'm often thus seized suddenly with grief,
I know not why.
Cham. You use me ill, Monimia;
And I might think, with justice, most severely
Of this unfaithful dealing with your brother.
Mon. Truly I'm not to blame: suppose I'm fond,
And grieve for what as much may please another?
Should I upbraid the dearest friend on earth
For the first fault? you would not do so, would you?
Cham. Not if I'd cause to think it was a friend.
Mon. Why do you then call this unfaithful dealing?
I ne'er concealed my soul from you before:
Bear with me now, and search my wounds no farther;
For every probing pains me to the heart.
Cham. 'Tis sign there's danger in't must be prevented.
Where's your new husband? still that thought disturbs you.
What! only answer me with tears? Castalio! [you.
Nay, now they stream;—
Cruel, unkind Castalio! is't not so?
Mon. I cannot speak, grief flows so fast upon me;
It chokes, and will not let me tell the cause.
Oh!
Cham. My Monimia, to my soul thou'rt dear,
As honour to my name; dear as the light
To eyes but just restored, and healed of blindness.
Why wilt thou not repose within my breast
The anguish that torments thee?
Mon. Oh! I dare not.

Cham. I have no friend but thee; we must confide
In one another. Two unhappy orphans,
Alas, we are; and, when I see thee grieve,
Methinks it is a part of me that suffers.

Mon. Oh, shouldst thou know the cause of my lamenting,
I'm satisfied, Chamont, that thou wouldst scorn me;
Thou wouldst despise the abject, lost Monimia;
No more wouldst praise this hated beauty; but
When in some cell, distracted, as I shall be,
Thou seest me lie, these unregarded locks
Matted like furies' tresses; my poor limbs
Chained to the ground; and, 'stead of the delights
Which happy lovers taste, my keeper's stripes,
A bed of straw, and a coarse wooden dish
Of wretched sustenance;—when thus thou seest me,
Pr'ythee have charity and pity for me:
Let me enjoy this thought!

Cham. Why wilt thou rack
My soul so long, Monimia? Ease me quickly;
Or thou wilt run me into madness first.

Mon. Could you be secret?

Cham. Secret as the grave.

Mon. But when I've told you, will you keep your fury
Within its bounds? will you not do some rash
And horrid mischief? for, indeed, Chamont,
You would not think how hardly I've been used
From a near friend; from one that has my soul
A slave, and therefore treats it like a tyrant.

Cham. I will be calm. But has Castalio wronged thee?
Has he already wasted all his love?
What has he done? quickly; for I'm all trembling
With expectation of a horrid tale.

Mon. Oh! could you think it?

Cham. What?

Mon. I fear he'll kill me.

Cham. Ha!

Mon. Indeed I do; he's strangely cruel to me;
Which, if it lasts, I'm sure must break my heart.
Cham. What has he done?
Mon. Most barbarously used me:
Nothing so kind as he, when in my arms,
In thousand kisses, tender sighs and joys,
Not to be thought again, the night was wasted.
At dawn of day, he rose, and left his conquest;
But when we met, and I with open arms
Ran to embrace the lord of all my wishes,
Oh, then—
Cham. Go on!
Mon. He threw me from his breast,
Like a detested sin.
Cham. How!
Mon. As I hung too
Upon his knees, and begged to know the cause,
He dragged me like a slave upon the earth,
And had no pity on my cries.
Cham. How! did he
Dash thee disdainfully away with scorn?
Mon. He did; and more, I fear will ne'er be friends,
Though I still love him with unbated passion.
Cham. What, throw thee from him!
Mon. Yes, indeed, he did.
Cham. So may this arm
Throw him to the earth, like a dead dog despised!
Lameness and leprosy, blindness and lunacy,
Poverty, shame, pride, and the name of villain,
Light on me, if, Castalio, I forgive thee!
Mon. Nay, now, Chamont, art thou unkind as he is:
Didst thou not promise me thou wouldst be calm?
Keep my disgrace concealed; why shouldst thou kill him?
By all my love, this arm should do him vengeance.
Alas! I love him still; and though I ne'er

Clasp him again within these longing arms,
Yet bless him, bless him, gods, where'er he goes!

Enter ACASTO.

Acast. Sure some ill fate is towards me; in my house
I only meet with oddness and disorder:
Each vassal has a wild distracted face,
And looks as full of business as a blockhead
In times of danger: just this very moment
I met Castalio—

Cham. Then you met a villain.

Acast. Ha!

Cham. Yes, a villain.

Acast. Have a care, young soldier,
How thou'rt too busy with Acasto's fame;
I have a sword, my arm's good old acquaintance.
Villain to thee!

Cham. Curse on thy scandalous age,
Which hinders me to rush upon thy throat,
And tear the root up of that cursed bramble!

Acast. Ungrateful ruffian! sure my good old friend
Was ne'er thy father; nothing of him's in thee:
What have I done in my unhappy age,
To be thus used? I scorn to upbraid thee, boy;
But I could put thee in remembrance—

Cham. Do.

Acast. I scorn it!

Cham. No, I'll calmly hear the story;
For I would fain know all, to see which scale
Weighs most—Ha! is not that good old Acasto?
What have I done?—can you forgive this folly?

Acast. Why dost thou ask it?

Cham. 'Twas the rude o'erflowing
Of too much passion; pray, my lord, forgive me. [*Kneels.*

Acast. Mock me not, youth; I can revenge a wrong.

Cham. I know it well; but for this thought of mine,
Pity a madman's frenzy, and forget it.

Acast. I will; but henceforth, pr'ythee, be more kind. [*Raises him.*

Whence came the cause?

Cham. Indeed I've been to blame:
But I'll learn better; for you've been my father:
You've been her father too—
[*Takes* MONIMIA *by the hand.*

Acast. Forbear the prologue,
And let me know the substance of thy tale.

Cham. You took her up a little tender flower,
Just sprouted on a bank, which the next frost
Had nipped; and, with a careful loving hand,
Transplanted her into your own fair garden,
Where the sun always shines; there long she flourished,
Grew sweet to sense, and lovely to the eye;
Till, at the last, a cruel spoiler came,
Cropped this fair rose, and rifled all its sweetness,
Then cast it, like a loathsome weed, away.

Acast. You talk to me in parables, Chamont.
You may have known that I'm no wordy man:
Fine speeches are the instruments of knaves,
Or fools, that use them when they want good sense;
But honesty
Needs no disguise nor ornament. Be plain.

Cham. Your son—

Acast. I've two; and both, I hope, have honour.

Cham. I hope so too—but—

Acast. Speak.

Cham. I must inform you,
Once more, Castalio—

Acast. Still Castalio!

Cham. Yes.
Your son Castalio has wronged Monima.

Acast. Ha! wronged her?

Cham. Married her.

Acast. I'm sorry for't.

Cham. Why sorry? By yon blest Heaven! there's not a lord
But might be proud to take her to his heart.
Acast. I'll not deny't.
Cham. You dare not; by the gods!
You dare not; all your family, combined
In one damned falsehood to out-do Castalio,
Dare not deny't.
Acast. How has Castalio wronged her?
Cham. Ask that of him: I say, my sister's wronged;
Monimia, my sister, born as high
And noble as Castalio. Do her justice,
Or, by the gods! I'll lay a scene of blood
Shall make this dwelling horrible to nature.
I'll do't. Hark you, my lord; your son Castalio,
Take him to your closet, and there teach him manners.
Acast. You shall have justice.
Cham. Nay, I will have justice.
Who'll sleep in safety that has done me wrong?
My lord, I'll not disturb you to repeat
The cause of this: I beg you (to preserve
Your house's honour) ask it of Castalio.
Acast. I will.
Cham. Till then, farewell! [*Exit.*
Acast. Farewell, proud boy!
Monimia!
Mon. My lord.
Acast. You are my daughter.
Mon. I am, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe to own me.
Acast. When you'll complain to me, I'll prove a father. [*Exit.*
Mon. Now I'm undone for ever: who on earth
Is there so wretched as Monimia?
First by Castalio cruelly forsaken;
I've lost Acasto now: his parting frowns
May well instruct me rage is in his heart:
I shall be next abandoned to my fortune,

Thrust out a naked wanderer to the world,
And branded for the mischievous Monimia!
What will become of me? My cruel brother
Is framing mischiefs too, for aught I know,
That may produce bloodshed, and horrid murder;
I would not be the cause of one man's death,
To reign the empress of the earth; nay, more,
I'd rather lose for ever my Castalio,
My dear unkind Castalio!

Enter POLYDORE.

Pol. Monimia weeping!
So morning dews on new-blown roses lodge,
By the sun's amorous heat to be exhaled.
I come, my love, to kiss all sorrow from thee.
What mean these sighs? and why thus beats thy heart?

Mon. Let me alone to sorrow: 'tis a cause
None e'er shall know; but it shall with me die.

Pol. Happy, Monimia, he to whom these sighs,
These tears, and all these languishings are paid!
I am no stranger to your dearest secret;
I know your heart was never meant for me:
That jewel's for an elder brother's price.

Mon. My lord!

Pol. Nay, wonder not; last night I heard
His oaths, your vows, and to my torment saw
Your wild embraces; heard the appointment made:
I did, Monimia, and I cursed the sound.
Wilt thou be sworn my love? wilt thou be ne'er
Unkind again?

Mon. Banish such fruitless hopes:
Have you sworn constancy to my undoing?
Will you be ne'er my friend again?

Pol. What means
My love?

Mon. Away! What meant my lord, last night?

Pol. Is that a question now to be demanded?
I hope Monimia was not much displeased.
Mon. Was it well done to treat me like a prostitute?
To assault my lodging at the dead of night,
And threaten me if I denied admittance?—
You said you were Castalio—
Pol. By those eyes!
It was the same; I spent my time much better;
I tell thee, ill-natured fair one, I was posted
To more advantage,—on a pleasant hill
Of springing joy, and everlasting sweetness.
Mon. Ha!—have a care—
Pol. Where is the danger near me?
Mon. I fear you're on a rock will wreck your quiet,
And drown your soul in wretchedness for ever;
A thousand horrid thoughts crowd on my memory.
Will you be kind, and answer me one question?
Pol. I'd trust thee with my life; on those soft breasts
Breathe out the choicest secrets of my heart,
Till I had nothing in it left but love.
Mon. Nay, I'll conjure you, by the gods, and angels,
By the honour of your name, that's most concerned,
To tell me, Polydore, and tell me truly,
Where did you rest last night?
Pol. Within thy arms
I triumphed: rest had been my foe.
Mon. 'Tis done. [*She faints.*
Pol. She faints! No help! Who waits? A curse
Upon my vanity, that could not keep
The secret of my happiness in silence.
Confusion! we shall be surprised anon;
And consequently all must be betrayed.
Monimia!—she breathes.—Monimia!
Mon. Well;
Let mischiefs multiply! Let every hour

Of my loathed life yield me increase of horror!
Oh, let the sun to these unhappy eyes
Ne'er shine again, but be eclipsed for ever!
May every thing I look on seem a prodigy,
To fill my soul with terrors, till I quite
Forget I ever had humanity,
And grow a curser of the works of nature!
Pol. What means all this?
Mon. Oh, Polydore, if all
The friendship e'er you vowed to good Castalio
Be not a falsehood; if you ever loved
Your brother, you've undone yourself and me.
Pol. Which way can ruin reach the man that's rich,
As I am, in possession of thy sweetness?
Mon. Oh! I'm his wife.
Pol. What says Monimia? ha!
Speak that again.
Mon. I am Castalio's wife.
Pol. His married, wedded wife?
Mon. Yesterday's sun
Saw it performed.
Pol. And then have I enjoyed
My brother's wife?
Mon. As surely as we both
Must taste of misery, that guilt is thine.
Pol. Must we be miserable then?
Mon. Oh!
Pol. Oh! thou mayst yet be happy.
Mon. Couldst thou be
Happy, with such a weight upon thy soul?
Pol. It may be yet a secret: I'll go try
To reconcile and bring Castalio to thee;
Whilst from the world I take myself away,
And waste my life in penance for my sin.
Mon. Then thou wouldst more undo me; heap a load
Of added sins upon my wretched head:

Wouldst thou again have me betray thy brother,
And bring pollution to his arms? curst thought!
Oh, when shall I be mad indeed!

Pol. Nay, then,
Let us embrace, and from this very moment
Vow an eternal misery together.

Mon. And wilt thou be a very faithful wretch?
Never grow fond of cheerful peace again?
Wilt thou with me study to be unhappy,
And find out ways how to increase affliction?

Pol. We'll institute new arts unknown before
To vary plagues, and make them look like new ones.
First, if, the fruit of our detested joy,
A child be born, it shall be murdered—

Mon. No;
Sure that may live?

Pol. Why?

Mon. To become a thing
More wretched than its parents; to be branded
With all our infamy, and curse its birth.

Pol. That's well contrived; then thus let's go together,
Full of our guilt, distracted where to roam,
Like the first wretched pair expelled their paradise.
Let's find some place where adders nest in winter,
Loathsome and venomous; where poisons hang
Like gums against the walls; where witches meet
By night, and feed upon some pampered imp,
Fat with the blood of babes: there we'll inhabit,
And live up to the height of desperation.
Desire shall languish like a withering flower,
And no distinction of the sex be thought of.
Horrors shall fright me from those pleasing harms,
And I'll no more be caught with beauty's charms;
But when I'm dying, take me in thy arms! [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*The Garden before* ACASTO's *House.*

CASTALIO *discovered lying on the ground.*

SONG.

Come, all ye youths, whose hearts e'er bled
  By cruel beauty's pride;
Bring each a garland on his head,
  Let none his sorrows hide:
But hand in hand around me move,
Singing the saddest tales of love;
  And see, when your complaints ye join,
  If all your wrongs can equal mine.

The happiest mortal once was I;
  My heart no sorrows knew:
Pity the pain with which I die;
  But ask not whence it grew.
Yet if a tempting fair you find,
That's very lovely, very kind,
  Though bright as Heaven, whose stamp she bears,
  Think of my fate, and shun her snares.

Cast. See where the deer trot after one another,
Male, female, father, daughter, mother, son,
Brother and sister, mingled all together;
No discontent they know, but in delightful
Wildness and freedom, pleasant springs, fresh her-
Calm harbours, lusty health and innocence, [bage,

Enjoy their portion; if they see a man,
How will they turn together all, and gaze
Upon the monster!
Once in a season too they taste of love:
Only the beast of reason is its slave,
And in that folly drudges all the year.

Enter ACASTO.

Acast. Castalio! Castalio!
Cast. Who's there
So wretched but to name Castalio?
Acast. I hope my message may succeed.
Cast. My father!
'Tis joy to see you, though where sorrow's nourished.
Acast. I'm come in beauty's cause; you'll guess the rest.
Cast. A woman! if you love my peace of mind,
Name not a woman to me; but to think
Of woman, were enough to taint my brains,
Till they ferment to madness! O my father!
Acast. What ails my boy?
Cast. A woman is the thing
I would forget, and blot from my remembrance.
Acast. Forget Monimia!
Cast. She to choose: Monimia!
The very sound's ungrateful to my sense.
Acast. This might seem strange; but you, I've found, will hide
Your heart from me; you dare not trust your father.
Cast. No more Monimia!
Acast. Is she not your wife? [wife?
Cast. So much the worse: who loves to hear of
When you would give all worldly plagues a name
Worse than they have already, call them wife:
But a new-married wife's a teeming mischief,
Full of herself: why, what a deal of horror [day!
Has that poor wretch to come, that wedded yester-

Acast. Castalio, you must go along with me,
And see Monimia.
Cast. Sure, my lord but mocks me:
Go see Monimia! Pray, my lord, excuse me;
And leave the conduct of this part of life
To my own choice.
Acast. I say, no more dispute:
Complaints are made to me, that you have wronged [her.
Cast. Who has complained?
Acast. Her brother to my face proclaimed her
And in such terms they've warmed me. [wronged,
Cast. What terms? Her brother! Heaven! where learnt he that?
What, does she send her hero with defiance?
He durst not sure affront you?
Acast. No, not much.
But—
Cast. Speak, what said he?
Acast. That thou wert a villain:
Methinks I would not have thee thought a villain.
Cast. Shame on the ill-mannered brute! Your age
He durst not else have said so. [secured him;
Acast. By my sword,
I would not see thee wronged, and bear it vilely;
Though I have passed my word she shall have justice.
Cast. Justice! to give her justice would undo her:
Think you this solitude I now have chosen,
Left joys just opening to my sense, sought here
A place to curse my fate in, measured out
My grave at length, wished to have grown one piece
With this cold clay, and all without a cause?

Enter CHAMONT.

Cham. Where is the hero, famous and renowned
For wronging innocence, and breaking vows;
Whose mighty spirit, and whose stubborn heart,
No woman can appease, nor man provoke?

Acast. I guess, Chamont, you come to seek Castalio.
Cham. I come to seek the husband of Monimia.
Cast. The slave is here.
Cham. I thought ere now to have found you
Atoning for the ills you've done Chamont;
For you have wronged the dearest part of him.
Monimia, young lord, weeps in this heart;
And all the tears thy injuries have drawn
From her poor eyes are drops of blood from hence.
Cast. Then you're Chamont?
Cham. Yes, and I hope no stranger
To great Castalio.
Cast. I've heard of such a man,
That has been very busy with my honour.
I own I'm much indebted to you, sir;
And here return the villain back again
You sent me by my father.
Cham. Thus I'll thank you. [*Draws.*
Acast. By this good sword, who first presumes to violence
Makes me his foe! [*Draws, and interposes.*
Young man, it once was thought [*To* CASTALIO.
I was fit guardian of my house's honour,
And you might trust your share with me.—For you,
[*To* CHAMONT.
Young soldier, I must tell you, you have wronged me:
I promised you to do Monimia right;
And thought my word a pledge I would not forfeit:
But you, I find, would fright us to performance.
Cast. Sir, in my younger years with care you taught me
That brave revenge was due to injured honour;
Oppose not then the justice of my sword,
Lest you should make me jealous of your love.
Cham. Into thy father's arms thou fliest for safety,
Because thou know'st the place is sanctified
With the remembrance of an ancient friendship.

Cast. I am a villain if I will not seek thee,
Till I may be revenged for all the wrongs
Done me by that ungrateful fair thou plead'st for.
Cham. She wronged thee! by the fury in my heart,
Thy father's honour's not above Monimia's!
Nor was thy mother's truth and virtue fairer.
Acast. Boy, don't disturb the ashes of the dead
With thy capricious follies: the remembrance
Of the loved creature that once filled these arms—
Cham. Has not been wronged.
Cast. It shall not.
Cham. No, nor shall
Monimia, though a helpless orphan, destitute
Of friends and fortune, though the unhappy sister
Of poor Chamont, whose sword is all his portion,
Be oppressed by thee, thou proud, imperious traitor!
Cast. Ha! set me free.
Cham. Come both!

Enter SERINA.

Ser. Alas! alas!
The cause of these disorders, my Chamont?
Who is't has wronged thee?
Cast. Now where art thou fled
For shelter?
Cham. Come from thine, and see what safeguard
Shall then betray my fears.
Ser. Cruel Castalio,
Sheathe up thy angry sword, and don't affright me.
Chamont, let once Serina calm thy breast;
If any of my friends have done thee injuries,
I'll be revenged, and love thee better for it.
Cast. Sir, if you'd have me think you did not take
This opportunity to show your vanity,
Let's meet some other time, when by ourselves
We fairly may dispute our wrongs together.
Cham. Till then, I am Castalio's friend.

Cast. Serina,
Farewell; I wish much happiness attend you.
Ser. Chamont's the dearest thing I have on earth;
Give me Chamont, and let the world forsake me!
Cham. Witness the gods, how happy I'm in thee!
No beauteous blossom of the fragrant spring,
Though the fair child of nature newly born,
Can be so lovely.—Angry, unkind Castalio,
Suppose I should awhile lay by my passions,
And be a beggar in Monimia's cause,
Might it be heard?
Cast. Sir, 'twas my last request
You would, though you I find will not be satisfied:
So, in a word, Monimia is my scorn;
She basely sent you here to try my fears;
That was your business.
No artful prostitute, in falsehoods practised,
To make advantage of her coxcomb's follies,
Could have done more—disquiet vex her for't!
Cham. Farewell. [*Exeunt* CHAMONT *and* SERINA.
Cast. Farewell.—My father, you seem troubled.
Acast. Would I'd been absent when this boisterous brave
Came to disturb thee thus! I'm grieved I hindered
Thy just resentment. But Monimia—
Cast. Damn her!
Acast. Don't curse her.
Cast. Did I?
Acast. Yes.
Cast. I'm sorry for't.
Acast. Methinks, if, as I guess, the fault's but small,
It might be pardoned.
Cast. No.
Acast. What has she done?
Cast. That she's my wife, may Heaven and you forgive me!
Acast. Be reconciled then.
Cast. No.

Acast. Go see her.
Cast. No.
Acast. I'll send and bring her hither.
Cast. No.
Acast. For my sake,
Castalio, and the quiet of my age.
Cast. Why will you urge a thing my nature starts at?
Acast. Pr'ythee forgive her.
Cast. Lightnings first shall blast me!
I tell you, were she prostrate at my feet,
Full of her sex's best dissembled sorrows,
And all that wondrous beauty of her own,
My heart might break, but it should never soften.

Enter FLORELLA.

Flor. My lord, where are you? O Castalio!
Acast. Hark!
Cast. What's that?
Flor. Oh, show me quickly, where's Castalio?
Acast. Why, what's the business?
Flor. Oh, the poor Monimia!
Cast. Ha!
Acast. What's the matter?
Flor. Hurried by despair,
She flies with fury over all the house,
Through every room of each apartment, crying,
"Where's my Castalio? give me my Castalio!"
Except she sees you, sure she'll grow distracted.
Cast. Ha! will she? does she name Castalio?
And with such tenderness? Conduct me quickly
To the poor lovely mourner. O my father!
Acast. Then wilt thou go? Blessings attend thy purpose.
Cast. I cannot hear Monimia's soul in sadness,
And be a man; my heart will not forget her.
But do not tell the world you saw this of me.
Acast. Delay not then, but haste and cheer thy love.

Cast. Oh! I will throw my impatient arms about her,
In her soft bosom sigh my soul to peace:
Till through the panting breast she finds the way
To mould my heart, and make it what she will.
Monimia! Oh! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* ACASTO'S *House.*

Enter MONIMIA.

Mon. Stand off, and give me room!
I will not rest till I have found Castalio,
My wishes' lord, comely as rising day,
Amidst ten thousand eminently known.
Flowers spring up where'er he treads; his eyes,
Fountains of brightness, cheering all about him—
When will they shine on me?—O stay, my soul!
I cannot die in peace till I have seen him.

Enter CASTALIO.

Cast. Who talks of dying, with a voice so sweet
That life's in love with't?

Mon. Hark! 'tis he that answers;
So in a camp, though at the dead of night,
If but the trumpet's cheerful noise is heard,
All at the signal leap from downy rest,
And every heart awakes, as mine does now.
Where art thou?

Cast. Here, my love.

Mon. No nearer, lest I vanish.

Cast. Have I been in a dream then all this while?
And art thou but the shadow of Monimia?
Why dost thou fly me thus?

Mon. Oh! were it possible that we could drown
In dark oblivion but a few past hours,
We might be happy.

Cast. Is't then so hard, Monimia, to forgive
A fault, where humble love, like mine, implores thee?
For I must love thee, though it prove my ruin.
Which way shall I court thee?
What shall I do to be enough thy slave,
And satisfy the lovely pride that's in thee?
I'll kneel to thee, and weep a flood before thee:
Yet pr'ythee, tyrant, break not quite my heart;
But when my task of penitence is done,
Heal it again, and comfort me with love.

Mon. If I am dumb, Castalio, and want words
To pay thee back this mighty tenderness,
It is because I look on thee with horror,
And cannot see the man I so have wronged.

Cast. Thou hast not wronged me.

Mon. Ah! alas, thou talk'st
Just as thy poor heart thinks. Have not I wronged [thee?

Cast. No.

Mon. Still thou wander'st in the dark, Castalio;
But wilt ere long stumble on horrid danger.

Cast. What means my love?

Mon. Couldst thou but forgive me!

Cast. What?

Mon. For my fault last night: alas, thou canst not!

Cast. I can, and do.

Mon. Thus crawling on the earth [*Kneels.*
Would I that pardon meet; the only thing
Can make me view the face of Heaven with hope.

Cast. Then let's draw near. [*Raises her.*

Mon. Ah me!

Cast. So in the fields,
When the destroyer has been out for prey,
The scattered lovers of the feathered kind,
Seeking, when danger's past, to meet again,
Make moan and call, by such degrees approach,
Till joining thus they bill, and spread their wings,
Murmuring love, and joy their fears are over.

Mon. Yet have a care, be not too fond of peace,
Lest, in pursuance of the goodly quarry,
Thou meet a disappointment that distracts thee.
Cast. My better angel, then, do thou inform me
What danger threatens me, and where it lies:
Why didst thou,—pr'ythee smile and tell me why,—
When I stood waiting underneath the window,
Quaking with fierce and violent desires
(The dropping dews fell cold upon my head,
Darkness enclosed, and the winds whistled round me,
Which with my mournful sighs made such sad music
As might have moved the hardest heart); why wert
Deaf to my cries, and senseless of my pains? [thou
Mon. Did I not beg thee to forbear inquiry?
Read'st thou not something in my face, that speaks
Wonderful change and horror from within me?
Cast. Then there is something yet which I've not known:
What dost thou mean by horror, and forbearance
Of more inquiry? Tell me, I beg thee tell me;
And don't betray me to a second madness.
Mon. Must I?
Cast. If, labouring in the pangs of death,
Thou wouldst do anything to give me ease,
Unfold this riddle ere my thoughts grow wild,
And let in fears of ugly form upon me.
Mon. My heart won't let me speak it; but remember,
Monimia, poor Monimia tells you this,
We ne'er must meet again.
Cast. What means my destiny?
For all my good or evil fate dwells in thee.
Ne'er meet again!
Mon. No, never.
Cast. Where's the power
On earth, that dares not look like thee, and say so?
Thou art my heart's inheritance; I served

A long and painful, faithful slavery for thee,
And who shall rob me of the dear-bought blessing?
Mon. Time will clear all, but now let this content you:
Heaven has decreed, and therefore I've resolved,—
With torment I must tell it thee, Castalio,—
Ever to be a stranger to thy love;
In some far-distant country waste my life,
And from this day to see thy face no more.
Cast. Where am I? Sure I wander 'midst enchant-
And never more shall find the way to rest. [ment,
But, O Monimia! art thou indeed resolved
To punish me with everlasting absence?
Why turn'st thou from me? I'm alone already.
Methinks I stand upon a naked beach,
Sighing to winds, and to the seas complaining,
Whilst afar off the vessel sails away,
Where all the treasure of my soul's embarked.
Wilt thou not turn?—Oh! could those eyes but speak,
I should know all, for love is pregnant in them;
They swell, they press their beams upon me still.
Wilt thou not speak? If we must part for ever,
Give me but one kind word to think upon,
And please myself withal, whilst my heart's breaking!
Mon. Ah, poor Castalio! [*Exit.*
Cast. Pity! by the gods,
She pities me! Then thou wilt go eternally?
What means all this? why all this stir, to plague
A single wretch? If but your word can shake
This world to atoms, why so much ado
With me? Think me but dead, and lay me so.

Enter POLYDORE.

Pol. To live, and live a torment to myself!
What dog would bear't, that knew but his condition?
We've little knowledge, and that makes us cowards,
Because it cannot tell us what's to come.

Cast. Who's there?
Pol. Why, what art thou?
Cast. My brother Polydore?
Pol. My name is Polydore.
Cast. Canst thou inform me—
Pol. Of what?
Cast. Of my Monimia?
Pol. No. Good-day.
Cast. In haste?
Methinks my Polydore appears in sadness.
Pol. Indeed, and so to me does my Castalio.
Cast. Do I?
Pol. Thou dost.
Cast. Alas! I've wondrous reason;
I'm strangely altered, brother, since I saw thee.
Pol. Why?
Cast. Oh! to tell thee would but put thy heart
To pain. Let me embrace thee but a little,
And weep upon thy neck; I would repose
Within thy friendly bosom all my follies;
For thou wilt pardon them, because they're mine.
Pol. Be not too credulous; consider first;
Friends may be false. Is there no friendship false?
Cast. Why dost thou ask me that? does this appear
Like a false friendship, when with open arms
And streaming eyes I run upon thy breast?
Oh, 'tis in thee alone I must have comfort!
Pol. I fear, Castalio, I have none to give thee.
Cast. Dost thou not love me then?
Pol. Oh, more than life:
I never had a thought of my Castalio
Might wrong the friendship we had vowed together.
Hast thou dealt so by me?
Cast. I hope I have.
Pol. Then tell me why this mourning; this disorder?
Cast. O Polydore! I know not how to tell thee;

Shame rises in my face, and interrupts
The story of my tongue.
Pol. I grieve my friend
Knows anything which he's ashamed to tell me;
Or didst thou e'er conceal thy thoughts from Polydore?
Cast. Oh! much too oft; but let me here conjure thee,
By all the kind affection of a brother,—
For I'm ashamed to call myself thy friend,—
Forgive me.
Pol. Well, go on.
Cast. Our destiny contrived
To plague us both with one unhappy love:
Thou, like a friend, a constant generous friend,
In its first pangs didst trust me with thy passion;
Whilst I still smoothed my pain with smiles before thee,
And made a contract I ne'er meant to keep.
Pol. How!
Cast. Still new ways I studied to abuse thee,
And kept thee as a stranger to my passion,
Till yesterday I wedded with Monimia.
Pol. Ah, Castalio,
Was that well done?
Cast. No; to conceal't from thee
Was much a fault.
Pol. A fault! When thou hast heard
The tale I'll tell, what wilt thou call it then?
Cast. How my heart throbs!
Pol. First, for thy friendship, traitor,
I cancel it thus; after this day I'll ne'er
Hold trust or converse with the false Castalio:
This witness Heaven!
Cast. What will my fate do with me?
I've lost all happiness, and know not why.
What means this, brother?
Pol. Perjured, treacherous wretch,
Farewell!

Cast. I'll be thy slave; and thou shalt use me
Just as thou wilt, do but forgive me.
Pol. Never.
Cast. Oh! think a little what thy heart is doing;
How from our infancy we hand in hand
Have trod the path of life in love together;
One bed has held us, and the same desires,
The same aversions, still employed our thoughts;
Whene'er had I a friend that was not Polydore's,
Or Polydore a foe that was not mine?
Even in the womb we embraced; and wilt thou now,
For the first fault, abandon and forsake me,
Leave me amidst afflictions to myself,
Plunged in the gulf of grief, and none to help me?
Pol. Go to Monimia; in her arms thou'lt find
Repose; she has the art of healing sorrows.
Cast. What arts?
Pol. Blind wretch, thou husband! there's a [question!
Go to her fulsome bed, and wallow there,
Till some hot ruffian, full of lust and wine,
Come storm thee out, and show thee what's thy [bargain.
Cast. Hold there, I charge thee!
Pol. Is she not a—
Cast. Whore?
Pol. Ay, whore; I think that word needs no explaining.
Cast. Alas! I can forgive even this to thee:
But let me tell thee, Polydore, I'm grieved
To find thee guilty of such low revenge,
To wrong that virtue which thou couldst not ruin.
Pol. It seems I lie then?
Cast. Should the bravest man
That e'er wore conquering sword but dare to whisper
What thou proclaim'st, he were the worst of liars:
My friend may be mistaken.
Pol. Damn the evasion!

Thou mean'st the worst; and he's a base-born villain
That said I lied.

Cast. Do, draw thy sword, and thrust it through my heart;
There is no joy in life, if thou art lost.
A base-born villain!

Pol. Yes, thou never camest
From old Acasto's loins; the midwife put
A cheat upon my mother, and, instead
Of a true brother, in the cradle by me
Placed some coarse peasant's cub, and thou art he.

Cast. Thou art my brother still.

Pol. Thou liest.

Cast. Nay then: [*He draws.*
Yet I am calm.

Pol. A coward's always so.

Cast. Ah—ah—that stings home: coward!

Pol. Ay, base-born coward, villain.

Cast. This to thy heart then, though my mother bore thee. [*They fight;* POLYDORE *drops his sword, and runs on* CASTALIO'S.

Pol. Now my Castalio is again my friend.

Cast. What have I done? my sword is in thy breast!

Pol. So I would have it be, thou best of men,
Thou kindest brother, and thou truest friend.

Cast. Ye gods, we're taught that all your works are justice;
You're painted merciful, and friends to innocence:
If so, then why these plagues upon my head?

Pol. Blame not the Heavens; here lies thy fate, Castalio.
They're not the gods, 'tis Polydore has wronged thee;
I've stained thy bed; thy spotless marriage-joys
Have been polluted by thy brother's lust.

Cast. By thee!

Pol. By me: last night the horrid deed
Was done, when all things slept, but rage and incest.

Cast. Now where's Monimia? Oh!

Re-enter MONIMIA.

Mon. I'm here; who calls me?
Methought I heard a voice
Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains,
When all his little flock's at feed before him.
But what means this? here's blood!

Cast. Ay, brother's blood.
Art thou prepared for everlasting pains?

Pol. Oh, let me charge thee by the eternal justice,
Hurt not her tender life!

Cast. Not kill her! Rack me,
Ye powers above, with all your choicest torments,
Horror of mind, and pains yet uninvented,
If I not practise cruelty upon her,
And wreak revenge some way yet never known!

Mon. That task myself have finished: I shall die
Before we part; I've drunk a healing draught
For all my cares, and never more shall wrong thee.

Pol. Oh, she is innocent.

Cast. Tell me that story,
And thou wilt make a wretch of me indeed.

Pol. Hadst thou, Castalio, used me like a friend,
This ne'er had happened; hadst thou let me know
Thy marriage, we had all now met in joy:
But, ignorant of that,
Hearing the appointment made, enraged to think
Thou hadst outdone me in successful love,
I, in the dark, went and supplied thy place;
Whilst all the night, 'midst our triumphant joys,
The trembling, tender, kind, deceived Monimia
Embraced, caressed, and called me her Castalio.

Cast. And all this is the work of my own fortune!
None but myself could e'er have been so curst.
My fatal love, alas! has ruined thee,
Thou fairest, goodliest frame the gods e'er made,
Or ever human eyes and heart adored!
I've murdered too my brother.

Why wouldst thou study ways to damn me further,
And force the sin of parricide upon me?

Pol. 'Twas my own fault, and thou art innocent.
Forgive the barbarous trespass of my tongue;
'Twas a hard violence; I could have died
With love of thee, even when I used thee worst;
Nay, at each word that my distraction uttered,
My heart recoiled, and 'twas half death to speak them.

Mon. Now, my Castalio, the most dear of men,
Wilt thou receive pollution to thy bosom,
And close the eyes of one that has betrayed thee?

Cast. Oh, I'm the unhappy wretch whose cursèd fate
Has weighed thee down into destruction with him;
Why then thus kind to me?

Mon. When I'm laid low i' the grave, and quite forgotten,
Mayst thou be happy in a fairer bride!
But none can ever love thee like Monimia.
When I am dead,—as presently I shall be,
For the grim tyrant grasps my heart already,—
Speak well of me; and if thou find ill tongues
Too busy with my fame, don't hear me wronged;
'Twill be a noble justice to the memory
Of a poor wretch once honoured with thy love.
How my head swims!—'tis very dark. Good-night!
[*Dies.*

Cast. If I survive thee! what a thought was that!
Thank Heaven, I go prepared against that curse!

Enter CHAMONT, *disarmed, and held by* ACASTO *and* Servants.

Cham. Gape, hell, and swallow me to quick damnation,
If I forgive your house, if I not live
An everlasting plague to thee, Acasto,
And all thy race! You've overpowered me now;
But hear me, Heaven!—Ah! here's the scene of death.

My sister, my Monimia! breathless!—Now,
Ye powers above, if ye have justice, strike,
Strike bolts through me, and through the cursed
Acast. My Polydore! [Castalio!
Pol. Who calls?
Acast. How camest thou wounded?
Cast. Stand off, thou hot-brained, boisterous, noisy
And leave me to my sorrows. [ruffian,
Cham. By the love
I bore her living, I will ne'er forsake her!
But here remain till my heart burst with sobbing.
Cast. Vanish, I charge thee, or—[*Draws a dagger.*
Cham. Thou canst not kill me;
That would be kindness, and against thy nature.
Acast. What means Castalio? Sure thou wilt not
More sorrows on thy aged father's head. [pull
Tell me, I beg you, tell me the sad cause
Of all this ruin.
Pol. That must be my task:
But 'tis too long for one in pains to tell;
You'll in my closet find the story written
Of all our woes. Castalio's innocent,
And so's Monimia; only I'm to blame:
Inquire no farther.
Cast. Thou, unkind Chamont,
Unjustly hast pursued me with thy hate,
And sought the life of him that never wronged thee:
Now, if thou wilt embrace a noble vengeance,
Come join with me and curse.
Cham. What?
Cast. First thyself,
As I do, and the hour that gave thee birth.
Confusion and disorder seize the world,
To spoil all trust and converse amongst men;
'Twixt families engender endless feuds,
In countries needless fears, in cities factions,
In states rebellion, and in churches schism;

Till all things move against the course of nature;
Till form's dissolved, the chain of causes broken,
And the originals of being lost!

Acast. Have patience.

Cast. Patience! preach it to the winds,
To roaring seas, or raging fires! The knaves
That teach it laugh at ye when ye believe them.
Strip me of all the common needs of life,
Scald me with leprosy, let friends forsake me,
I'll bear it all; but, cursed to the degree
That I am now, 'tis this must give me patience:
Thus I find rest, and shall complain no more.[1]
[*Stabs himself.*

Pol. Castalio! Oh! [*Dies.*

Cast. I come.
Chamont, to thee my birthright I bequeath:
Comfort my mourning father, heal his griefs,
[ACASTO *faints into the arms of a* Servant.
For I perceive they fall with weight upon him;
And for Monimia's sake, whom thou wilt find
I never wronged, be kind to poor Serina.
Now all I beg is, lay me in one grave
Thus with my love. Farewell! I now am—nothing.
[*Dies.*

Cham. Take care of good Acasto, whilst I go
To search the means by which the fates have plagued us.
'Tis thus that Heaven its empire does maintain;
It may afflict, but man must not complain.
[*Exeunt.*

[1] This may be rant, but it is rant in the right place. The line is a fine one that divides true from false hyperbole, but this utterance of Castalio has, I think, the real ring of maddened emotion, which is often absent from Dryden's heroic plays. Rage and despair do sometimes vent themselves in hyperbole and trope. Whether the poet can make us feel the utterance to be inevitable is the question, and that depends on his own sympathy with the situation.

SPOKEN BY SERINA.

You've seen one Orphan ruined here; and I
May be the next, if old Acasto die.
Should it prove so, I'd fain amongst you find
Who 'tis would to the fatherless be kind.
To whose protection might I safely go?
Is there amongst you no good-nature? No.
What should I do? Should I the godly seek,
And go a conventicling twice a week;
Quit the lewd stage, and its profane pollution,
Affect each form and saint-like institution;
So draw the brethren all to contribution?
Or shall I (as I guess the poet may
Within these three days) fairly run away?
No; to some city-lodgings I'll retire;
Seem very grave, and privacy desire;
Till I am thought some heiress rich in lands,
Fled to escape a cruel guardian's hands:
Which may produce a story worth the telling,
Of the next sparks that go a fortune-stealing.

THE SOLDIER'S FORTUNE.

Quem recitas, meus est, O Fidentine, libellus;
Sed male quum recitas, incipit esse tuus.[1]—

MARTIAL, Lib. I., Ep. 39.

[1] "The lines you read were writ by me alone,
But your bad reading makes them half your own."—H. S.

HIS Play is neither more nor less indecent than Otway's other comedies, but less uninteresting, on account of its autobiographical allusions to the writer's own adventures in Flanders, and the disbandment without their pay of the troops he was sent to join. Like most of the old comedies, this one throws light upon the manners, customs, and costumes of the period represented. Its distinctive quality is a certain rollicking vein of fun and mere buffoonery, together with a rapidity of movement and variety of incident, that vindicate the work from any charge of absolute dulness—nay, it is undeniably amusing to those whose stomach is strong enough not to be nauseated with the dirt. The play is not a mere jumble of bustling incidents, as many of the contemporary comedies are, written by one who "faggoted his notions as they fell." At least the main intrigue is regular and connected, and the characters speak naturally.

Otway wrote hastily, and "lived to please," since he must "please to live." *The Soldier's Fortune* is the kind of thing that pleased very much. For Downes tells us that the play was extraordinarily successful, bringing both profit and reputation to the theatre. Betterton acted the part of Beaugard, and Mrs. Barry played Lady Dunce. The dedication to Bentley, the publisher, is unique and curious, while the Epilogue shows the gloomy and bitter feelings to which the writer was now frequently a prey. Langbaine and Thornton have respectively drawn attention to the many different sources from which much of the plot and material of the play seems to have been taken. Thus Lady Dunce's scheme for conveying the ring and letter to her lover may be found in several earlier plays, and Otway probably derived it from Molière's *L'Ecole des Maris;* the story comes originally from Boccaccio.

The Soldier's Fortune was acted in 1681 and printed in 4to in the same year. In 1748 a farce, founded upon it, was brought out at Covent Garden, but was never printed.

To Mr. BENTLEY.

HAVE often (during this play's being in the press) been importuned for a preface; which you, I suppose, would have speak something in vindication of the comedy: now, to please you, Mr. Bentley, I will, as briefly as I can, speak my mind upon that occasion, which you may be pleased to accept of, both as a dedication to yourself, and next as a preface to the book.

And I am not a little proud that it has happened into my thoughts to be the first who in these latter years has made an epistle dedicatory to his stationer: it is a compliment as reasonable as it is just. For, Mr. Bentley, you pay honestly for the copy; and an epistle to you is a sort of an acquittance, and may be probably welcome; when to a person of higher rank and order, it looks like an obligation for praises, which he knows he does not deserve, and therefore is very unwilling to part with ready money for.

As to the vindication of this comedy, between friends and acquaintance, I believe it is possible that as much may be said in its behalf as heretofore has been for a great many others. But of all the apish qualities about me, I have not that of being fond of my own issue; nay, I must confess myself a very unnatural parent, for when it is once brought into the world, e'en let the brat shift for itself, I say.

The objections made against the merit of this poor play, I must confess, are very grievous—

First, says a lady, that shall be nameless because the world may think civilly of her: "Faugh! Oh, sherreu! 'tis so filthy, so bawdy, no modest woman ought to be seen at it: let me die, it has made me sick!" When the

world lies, Mr. Bentley, if that very lady has not easily digested a much ranker morsel in a little ale-house towards Paddington, and never made a face at it. But your true jilt is a creature that can extract bawdy out of the chastest sense, as easily as a spider can poison out of a rose; they know true bawdy, let it be never so much concealed, as perfectly as Falstaff did the true prince by instinct; they will separate the true metal from the alloy, let us temper it as well as we can. Some women are the touchstones of filthiness: though I have heard a lady (that has more modesty than any of those she-critics, and I am sure more wit) say, she wondered at the impudence of any of her sex, that would pretend to understand the thing called *bawdy*. So, Mr. Bentley, for aught I perceive, my play may be innocent yet, and the lady mistaken in pretending to the knowledge of a mystery above her; though to speak honestly, she has had, besides her wit, a liberal education; and if we may credit the world, has not buried her talent neither.

This is, Mr. Bentley, all I can say in behalf of my play: wherefore I throw it into your arms; make the best of it you can; praise it to your customers; sell ten thousand of them, if possible, and then you will complete the wishes of

Your Friend and Servant,

THO. OTWAY.

By Lord Falkland.

Forsaken dames with less concern reflect
On their inconstant hero's cold neglect
Than we (provoked by this ungrateful age)
Bear the hard fate of our abandoned stage.

With grief we see you ravished from our arms,
And curse the feeble virtue of our charms:
Curse your false hearts, for none so false as they,
And curse the eyes that stole those hearts away.
Remember, faithless friends, there was a time,
(But oh the sad remembrance of our prime!)
When to our arms with eager joys ye flew,
And we believed your treach'rous hearts as true
As e'er was nymph of ours to one of you.
But a more powerful Saint[1] enjoys ye now;
Fraught with sweet sins, and absolutions too:
To her are all your pious vows addressed;
She's both your love's and your religion's test,
The fairest prelate of her time, and best.
We own her more deserving far than we,
A just excuse for your inconstancy.
Yet 'twas unkindly done to leave us so;
First to betray with love, and then undo,
A horrid crime you're all addicted to.
Too soon, alas! your appetites are cloyed,
And Phillis rules no more when once enjoyed.
But all rash oaths of love and constancy
With the too short, forgotten pleasures die;
Whilst she, poor soul, robbed of her dearest ease,
Still drudges on with vain desire to please;
And restless follows you from place to place,
For tributes due to her autumnal face.
Deserted thus by such ungrateful men,
How can we hope you'll e'er return again?
Here's no new charm to tempt ye as before,
Wit now's our only treasure left in store,
And that's a coin will pass with you no more.
You who such dreadful bullies would appear,—
True bullies! quiet when there's danger near,—
Show your great souls in damning poets here.

[1] This was the *Female Prelate*, a tragedy by Settle, founded upon the well-known story of a female Pope.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Captain BEAUGARD.
COURTINE.
Sir DAVY DUNCE.
Sir JOLLY JUMBLE.
FRISK.
FOURBIN, a Servant to Beaugard.
BLOODY-BONES.
VERMIN, a Servant to Sir Davy.
WILL, Sylvia's Footman.
A Constable, Watchmen, Whores, Bullies, Drawer, &c.

Lady DUNCE.
SYLVIA.
Maid.

SCENE—LONDON.

THE SOLDIER'S FORTUNE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*The Mall in St. James's Park.*

Enter BEAUGARD, COURTINE, *and* FOURBIN.

BEAU. A pox o' fortune! Thou art always teasing me about fortune: thou risest in a morning with ill-luck in thy mouth; nay, never eatest a dinner, but thou sighest two hours after it, with thinking where to get the next. Fortune be damned, since the world's so wide!

Cour. As wide as it is, 'tis so thronged and crammed with knaves and fools, that an honest man can hardly get a living in it.

Beau. Do, rail, Courtine, do: it may get thee employment.

Cour. At you I ought to rail; 'twas your fault we left our employments abroad, to come home and be loyal; and now we as loyally starve for it.

Beau. Did not thy ancestors do it before thee, man? I tell thee, loyalty and starving are all one. The old cavaliers got such a trick of it in the king's exile, that their posterity could never thrive since.

Cour. 'Tis a fine equipage I am like to be reduced to; I shall be ere long as greasy as an Alsatian bully; this flopping hat, pinned up on one side, with a sandy, weather-beaten peruke, dirty linen, and, to complete the figure, a long scandalous iron sword jarring at my heels, like a—

Beau. Snarling, thou meanest, like its master.

Cour. My companions the worthy knights of the most noble order of the post; your peripatetic philosophers of the Temple-walks,[1] rogues in rags, and yet not honest; villains that undervalue damnation, will forswear themselves for a dinner, and hang their fathers for half-a-crown.

Beau. I am ashamed to hear a soldier talk of starving.

Cour. Why, what shall I do? I can't steal.

Beau. Though thou canst not steal, thou hast other vices enough for any industrious fellow to live comfortably upon.

Cour. What! wouldst thou have me turn rascal, and run cheating up and down the town for a livelihood? I would no more keep a blockhead company, and endure his nauseous nonsense, in hopes to get him, than I would be a drudge to an old woman with rheumatic eyes, hollow teeth, and stinking breath, for a pension: of all rogues, I would not be a fool-monger.

Beau. How well this niceness becomes thee! I'd fain see e'en thee turn parson in a pet, o' purpose to rail at all those vices which I know thou naturally

[1] Knights of the post were hired witnesses and men of straw who made a trade of becoming bail. They hung about the various inns of court so as to be available at a moment's notice. In *Hudibras* we read:

"Retain all sorts of witnesses
That ply i' the Temples under trees,
Or walk the Round with Knights o' th' Posts
About the crossed-legged Knights their hosts."

art fond of. Why, surely an old lady's pension need not be so despicable in the eyes of a disbanded officer, as times go, friend.

Cour. I am glad, Beaugard, you think so.

Beau. Why thou shalt think so too, man; be ruled by me, and I'll bring thee into good company,—families, Courtine, families; and such families, where formality's a scandal, and pleasure is the business; where the women are all wanton, and the men all witty, you rogue.

Cour. What, some of your worship's Wapping acquaintance, that you made last time you came over for recruits, and spirited away your landlady's daughter a-volunteering with you into France?

Beau. I'll bring thee, Courtine, where cuckoldom's in credit, and lewdness laudable; where thou shalt wallow in pleasures and preferments, revel all day, and every night lie in the arms of melting beauty, sweet as roses, and as springs refreshing.

Cour. Pr'ythee don't talk thus; I had rather thou wouldst tell me where new levies are to be raised: a pox of whores, when a man has not money to make 'em comfortable!

Beau. That shall shower upon us in abundance; and for instance, know, to thy everlasting amazement, all this dropped out of the clouds to-day.

Cour. Ha! gold, by this light!

Four. Out of the clouds?

Beau. Ay, gold! does it not smell of the sweet hand that sent it? Smell—smell, you dog!

[*To* FOURBIN.

[FOURBIN *smells the handful of gold, and gathers up some pieces in his mouth.*

Four. Truly, sir, of heavenly sweetness, and very refreshing.

Cour. Dear Beaugard, if thou hast any good-nature in thee, if thou wouldst not have me hang

myself before my time, tell me where the devil haunts that helped thee to this, that I may go make a bargain with him presently: speak, speak, or I am a lost man.

Beau. Why, thou must know this devil, which I have given my soul to already, and must I suppose have my body very speedily, lives I know not where, and may, for aught I know, be a real devil; but if it be, 'tis the best natured devil under Beelzebub's dominions,—that I'll swear to.

Cour. But how came the gold, then?

Beau. To deal freely with my friend, I am lately happened into the acquaintance of a very reverend pimp, as fine a discreet, sober, grey-bearded old gentleman as one would wish; as good a natured public-spirited person as the nation holds; one that is never so happy as when he is bringing good people together, and promoting civil understanding betwixt the sexes: nay, rather than want employment, he will go from one end of the town to t'other, to procure my lord's little dog to be civil to my lady's little languishing bitch.

Cour. A very worthy member of the commonwealth!

Beau. This noble person one day—but Fourbin can give you a more particular account of the matter. Sweet sir, if you please, tell us the story of the first encounter betwixt you and Sir Jolly Jumble. You must know that's his title.

Four. Sir, it shall be done. Walking one day upon the Piazza,[1] about three of the clock i' the afternoon, to get me a stomach to my dinner, I chanced to encounter a person of goodly presence and worthy appearance; his beard and hair white, grave, and comely; his countenance ruddy, plump, smooth, and cheerful; who perceiving me also equipped as I am,

[1] In Covent Garden.

with a mien and air which might well inform him I was a person of no inconsiderable quality, came very respectfully up to me, and, after the usual ceremonies between persons of parts and breeding had passed, very humbly inquired of me "What is it o'clock?" I presently understanding by the question that he was a man of parts and business, told him I did presume it was at most but nicely turned of three.

Beau. Very court-like, civil, quaint, and new, I think.

Four. The freedom of commerce increasing, after some little inconsiderable questions *pour passer le temps*, and so, he was pleased to offer me the courtesy of a glass of wine: I told him I very seldom drank, but, if he so pleased, I would do myself the honour to present him with a dish of meat at an eating-house hard by, where I had an interest.

Cour. Very well: I think this squire of thine, Beaugard, is as accomplished a person as any of the employment I ever saw.

Beau. Let the rogue go on.

Four. In short, we agreed and went together. As soon as we entered the room, "I am your most humble servant, sir," says he. "I am the meanest of your vassals, sir," said I. "I am very happy in lighting into the acquaintance of so worthy a gentleman as you appear to be, sir," said he again. "Worthy Sir Jolly,"—then came I upon him again on t'other side (for you must know by that time I had groped out his title), "I kiss your hands from the bottom of my heart, which I shall be always ready to lay at your feet."

Cour. Well, Fourbin, and what replied the knight then?

Four. Nothing, he had nothing to say; his sense was transported with admiration of my parts: so we sat down, and after some pause, he desired to know

by what title he was to distinguish the person that had so highly honoured him.

Beau. That is as much as to say, sir, whose rascal you were.

Four. Sir, you may make as bold with your poor slave as you please.—I told him those that knew me well were pleased to call me the Chevalier Fourbin; that I was a cadet of the ancient family of the Fourbinois; and that I had had the honour of serving the great monarch of France in his wars in Flanders, where I contracted great familiarity and intimacy with a gallant officer of the English troops in that service, one Captain Beaugard.

Beau. Oh, sir, you did me too much honour. What a true-bred rogue's this!

Cour. Well, but the money, Fourbin, the money?

Four. "Beaugard, hum! Beaugard," says he—"ay, it must be so,—a black man, is he not?" "Ay," says I, "blackish—a dark brown." "Full-faced?" "Yes." "A sly, subtle, observing eye?" "The same." "A strong-built, well-made man?" "Right." "A devilish fellow for a wench, a devilish fellow for a wench, I warrant him; a thundering rogue upon occasion—Beaugard! a thundering fellow for a wench: I must be acquainted with him."

Cour. But to the money, the money, man; that's the thing I would be acquainted withal.

Beau. This civil gentleman of the chevalier's acquaintance comes yesterday morning to my lodging, and seeing my picture in miniature upon the toilet, told me, with the greatest ecstasy in the world, that was the thing he came to me about: he told me there was a lady of his acquaintance had some favourable thoughts of me, and "I'gad," says he, "she's a hummer; such a *bona roba*,[1] ah!"—So without more ado begs me to lend it him till dinner (for we

[1] A courtesan.

concluded to eat together); so away he scuttled with as great joy as if he had found the philosopher's stone.

Cour. Very well.

Beau. At Locket's[1] we met again; where after a thousand grimaces, to show how much he was pleased, instead of my picture, presents me with the contents aforesaid; and told me the lady desired me to accept of them for the picture, which she was much transported withal, as well as with the original.

Cour. Ha!

Beau. Now, whereabouts this taking quality lies in me, the devil take me, Ned, if I know; but the fates, Ned, the fates!

Cour. A curse on the fates! Of all strumpets, fortune's the basest. 'Twas fortune made me a soldier, a rogue in red, the grievance of the nation; fortune made the peace just when we were on the brink of a war; then fortune disbanded us, and lost us two months' pay: fortune gave us debentures instead of ready money, and by very good fortune I sold mine, and lost heartily by it, in hopes the grinding ill-natured dog that bought it will never get a shilling for't.

Beau. Leave off thy railing, for shame! it looks like a cur that barks for want of bones. Come, times may mend, and an honest soldier be in fashion again.

Cour. These greasy, fat, unwieldy, wheezing rogues that live at home, and brood over their bags, when a fit of fear's upon them, then if one of us pass but by, all the family is ready at the door to cry, "Heavens bless you, sir! the Laird go along with you!"

Beau. "Ah, good men; what pity 'tis such proper gentlemen should ever be out of employment!"

[1] A famous ordinary, which stood on the site of Drummond's bank at Charing Cross, frequently alluded to by writers of the period.

Cour. But when the business is over, then every parish bawd that goes but to a conventicle twice a week, and pays but scot and lot to the parish, shall roar out, "Faugh, ye lousy red-coat rake-hells! hout, ye caterpillars, ye locusts of the nation! you are the dogs that would enslave us all, plunder our shops, and ravish our daughters, ye scoundrels!"

Beau. I must confess ravishing ought to be regulated; it would destroy commerce, and many a good sober matron about this town might lose the selling of her daughter's maidenhead, which were a great grievance to the people, and a particular branch of property lost. Fourbin!

Four. Your worship's pleasure?

Beau. Run, like a rogue as you are, and try to find Sir Jolly, and desire him to meet me at the Blue-Posts in the Haymarket about twelve; we'll dine together. [*Exit* FOURBIN.] I must inquire farther into yesterday's adventure; in the mean time, Ned, here's half the prize, to be doing withal: old friends must preserve correspondence; we have shared good fortune together, and bad shall never part us.

Cour. Well, thou wilt certainly die in a ditch for this: hast thou no more grace than to be a true friend? nay, to part with thy money to thy friend? I grant you, a gentleman may swear and lie for his friend, pimp for his friend, hang for his friend, and so forth; but to part with ready money is the devil.

Beau. Stand aside; either I am mistaken, or yonder's Sir Jolly coming: now, Courtine, will I show thee the flower of knighthood. Ah, Sir Jolly!

Enter Sir JOLLY JUMBLE.

Sir Jol. My hero! my darling! my Ganymede! how dost thou? Strong! wanton! lusty! rampant! ha, ah, ah! She's thine, boy! odd, she's thine; plump, soft, smooth, wanton! ha, ah, ah! Ah, rogue! ah,

rogue! here's shoulders! here's shape! there's a foot and leg, here's a leg, here's a leg—Qua-a-a-a-a!

[*Squeaks like a cat, and tickles* BEAUGARD'S *legs.*

Cour. What an old goat's this!

Sir Jol. Child, child, child, who's that? a friend of thine, a friend o' thine? A pretty fellow, odd, a very pretty fellow, and a strong dog I'll warrant him. How dost do, dear heart? pr'ythee let me kiss thee. I'll swear and vow I will kiss thee; ha, ha, he, he, he, he, a toad, a toad, a toa-a-a-d!

Cour. Sir, I am your humble servant.

Beau. But the lady, Sir Jolly, the lady; how does the lady? what says the lady, Sir Jolly?

Sir Jol. What says the lady! why, she says—she says—odd, she has a delicate lip, such a lip, so red, so hard, so plump, so blub; I fancy I am eating cherries every time I think on't—and for her neck and breasts, and her—odd's life! I'll say no more, not a word more; but I know, I know—

Beau. I am sorry for that with all my heart; do you know, say you, sir? and would you put off your mumbled orts,[1] your offal, upon me?

Sir Jol. Hush, hush, hush! have a care; as I live and breathe, not I; alack and well-a-day, I am a poor old fellow, decayed and done: all's gone with me, gentlemen, but my good-nature; odd, I love to know how matters go though now and then, to see a pretty wench and a young fellow touze and rouze and frouze and mouze; odd, I love a young fellow dearly, faith dearly!

Cour. This is the most extraordinary rogue I ever met withal.

Beau. But, Sir Jolly, in the first place, you must know I have sworn never to marry.

Sir Jol. I would not have thee, man: I am a bachelor myself and have been a whore-master all

[1] Refuse.

my life;—besides, she's married already, man; her husband's an old, greasy, untoward, ill-natured, slovenly, tobacco-taking cuckold; but plaguy jealous.

Beau. Already a cuckold, Sir Jolly?

Sir Jol. No, that shall be, my boy; thou shalt make him one, and I'll pimp for thee, dear heart; and shan't I hold the door? shan't I peep, ha? shan't I, you devil, you little dog, shan't I?

Beau. What is it I'd not grant to oblige my patron!

Sir Jol. And then dost hear? I have a lodging for thee in my own house: dost hear, old soul? in my own house; she lives the very next door, man; there's but a wall to part her chamber and thine; and then for a peep-hole—odd's fish, I have a peep-hole for thee; 'sbud, I'll show thee, I'll show thee—

Beau. But when, Sir Jolly? I am in haste, impatient.

Sir Jol. Why, this very night, man; poor rogue's in haste, poor rogue; but hear you—

Cour. The matter?

Sir Jol. Shan't we dine together?

Beau. With all my heart.

Sir Jol. The Mall begins to empty. Get you before, and bespeak dinner at the Blue-Posts; while I stay behind and gather up a dish of whores for a dessert.

Cour. Be sure that they be lewd, drunken, stripping whores, Sir Jolly, that won't be affectedly squeamish and troublesome.

Sir Jol. I warrant you.

Cour. I love a well-disciplined whore, that shows all the tricks of her profession with a wink, like an old soldier that understands all his exercise by beat of drum.

Sir Jol. Ah, thief, sayest thou so? I must be better acquainted with that fellow; he has a notable nose; a hard brawny carle, true and trusty, and mettle, I'll warrant him.

Beau. Well, Sir Jolly, you'll not fail us?

Sir Jol. Fail ye! am I a knight? hark ye, boys: I'll muster this evening such a regiment of rampant, roaring, roisterous whores, that shall make more noise than if all the cats in the Haymarket were in conjunction; whores, ye rogues, that shall swear with you, drink with you, talk bawdy with you, fight with you, scratch with you, lie with you, and go to the devil with you. Shan't we be very merry, ha?

Cour. As merry as wine, women, and wickedness can make us.

Sir Jol. Odd, that's well said again, very well said; as merry as wine, women, and wickedness can make us. I love a fellow that's very wicked dearly: methinks there's a spirit in him, there's a sort of tantara-rara; tantara-rara, ah, ah! well, and won't ye, when the women come, won't ye, and shall I not see a little sport amongst you? well, get ye gone; ah, rogues, ah, rogues, da, da, I'll be with you, da, da!

[*Exeunt* BEAUGARD *and* COURTINE.

Enter several Whores, *and Three* Bullies.

1st Bully. In the name of Satan, what whores are these in their copper trim, yonder?

1st Whore. Well, I'll swear, madam, 'tis the finest evening;—I love the Mall mightily.

2nd Bully. Let's huzza the bulkers.

2nd Whore. Really, and so do I; because there's always good company, and one meets with such civilities from every body.

3rd Bully. Damned whores! hout, ye filthies!

3rd Whore. Ay, and then I love extremely to show myself here, when I am very fine, to vex those poor devils that call themselves virtues, and are very scandalous and crapish, I'll swear. O crimine! who's yonder? Sir Jolly Jumble, I vow.

1st Bully. Faugh! let's leave the nasty sows to fools and diseases. [*Exeunt* Bullies.

1st Whore. Oh papa, papa! where have you been these two days, papa?

2nd Whore. You are a precious father indeed, to take no more care of your children! we might be dead for all you, you naughty daddy, you.

Sir Jol. Dead, my poor fubses! odd, I had rather all the relations I have were dead; a-dad, I had. Get you gone, you little devils! Bubbies! oh, law, there's bubbies!—odd, I'll bite 'em; odd, I will!

1st Whore. Nay, fie, papa! I'll swear you'll make me angry, except you carry us and treat us to-night; you have promised me a treat this week; won't you, papa?

2nd Whore. Ay, won't you, dad?

Sir Jol. Odds so, odds so, well remembered! get you gone, don't stay talking: get you gone! Yonder's a great lord, the Lord Beaugard, and his cousin the baron, the count, the marquis, the Lord knows what, Monsieur Courtine, newly come to town, odds so.

3rd Whore. O law, where, daddy, where? O dear, a lord!

1st Whore. Well, you are the purest papa; but where be dey mun, papa?

Sir Jol. I won't tell you, you gipsies, so I won't—except you tickle me: 'sbud they are brave fellows, all tall, and not a bit small; odd, one of 'em has a devilish deal of money.

1st Whore. Oh, dear! but which is he, papa?

2nd Whore. Shan't I be in love with him, daddy?

Sir Jol. What, nobody tickle me! nobody tickle me!—not yet? Tickle me a little, Mally—tickle me a little, Jenny—do! he, he, he, he, he, he! [*They tickle him.*] No more, O dear, O dear! poor rogues! so, so, no more,—nay, if you do, if you do, odd I'll, I'll, I'll—

3rd Whore. What, what will you do, trow?

Sir Jol. Come along with me, come along with me; sneak after me at a distance, that nobody take notice: swingeing fellows, Mally—swingeing fellows, Jenny; a devilish deal of money: get you afore me then, you little didappers, ye wasps, ye wagtails, get you gone, I say; swingeing fellows! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* Sir DAVY DUNCE'S *House.*

Enter Lady DUNCE *and* SYLVIA.

L. Dunce. Die a maid, Sylvia, fie, for shame! what a scandalous resolution's that! Five thousand pounds to your portion, and leave it all to hospitals, for the innocent recreation hereafter of leading apes in hell?[1] fie, for shame!

Sylv. Indeed, such another charming animal as your consort, Sir Davy, might do much with me; 'tis an unspeakable blessing to lie all night by a horse-load of diseases; a beastly, unsavoury, old, groaning, grunting, wheezing wretch, that smells of the grave he's going to already. From such a curse, and hair-cloth next my skin, good Heaven deliver me!

L. Dunce. Thou mistakest the use of a husband, Sylvia: they are not meant for bedfellows; heretofore, indeed, 'twas a fulsome fashion, to lie o' nights with a husband; but the world's improved, and customs altered.

Sylv. Pray instruct me then what the use of a husband is.

L. Dunce. Instead of a gentleman-usher for ceremony's sake, to be in waiting on set days and

[1] The fate, according to an old proverb, of those who die maids.

particular occasions; but the friend, cousin, is the jewel unvaluable.

Sylv. But Sir Davy, madam, will be difficult to be so governed; I am mistaken if his nature is not too jealous to be blinded.

L. Dunce. So much the better; of all, the jealous fool is easiest to be deceived: for observe, where there's jealousy there's always fondness; which if a woman, as she ought to do, will make the right use of, the husband's fears shall not so awake him on one side, as his dotage shall blind him on the other.

Sylv. Is your piece of mortality such a doting doodle? is he so very fond of you?

L. Dunce. No, but he has the vanity to think that I am very fond of him; and if he be jealous, 'tis not so much for fear I do abuse, as that in time I may, and therefore imposes this confinement on me; though he has other divertisements that take him off from my enjoyment, which make him so loathsome no woman but must hate him.

Sylv. His private divertisements I am a stranger to.

L. Dunce. Then for his person, 'tis incomparably odious; he has such a breath, one kiss of him were enough to cure the fits of the mother;[1] 'tis worse than assafœtida.

Sylv. Oh, hideous!

L. Dunce. Everything that's nasty he affects: clean linen he says is unwholesome; and to make him more charming, he's continually eating of garlic and chewing tobacco.

Sylv. Faugh! this is love! this is the blessing of matrimony!

L. Dunce. Rail not so unreasonably against love, Sylvia. As I have dealt freely, and acknowledged to thee the passion I have for Beaugard, so methinks

[1] Hysterics.

Sylvia need not conceal her good thoughts of her friend. Do not I know Courtine sticks in your stomach?

Sylv. If he does, I'll assure you he shall never get to my heart. But can you have the conscience to love another man now you are married? What do you think will become of you?

L. Dunce. I tell thee, Sylvia, I was never married to that engine we have been talking of; my parents indeed made me say something to him after a priest once, but my heart went not along with my tongue; I minded not what it was: for my thoughts, Sylvia, for these seven years, have been much better employed—Beaugard! Ah, curse on the day that first sent him into France!

Sylv. Why so, I beseech you?

L. Dunce. Had he stayed here, I had not been sacrificed to the arms of this monument of man, for the bed of death could not be more cold than his has been: he would have delivered me from the monster, for even then I loved him, and was apt to think my kindness not neglected.

Sylv. I find indeed your ladyship had good thoughts of him.

L. Dunce. Surely 'tis impossible to think too well of him, for he has wit enough to call his good-nature in question, and yet good-nature enough to make his wit suspected.

Sylv. But how do you hope ever to get sight of him? Sir Davy's watchfulness is invincible. I dare swear he would smell out a rival if he were in the house, only by natural instinct; as some that always sweat when a cat's in the room. Then again, Beaugard's a soldier, and that's a thing the old gentleman, you know, loves dearly.

L. Dunce. There lies the greatest comfort of my uneasy life; he is one of those fools, forsooth, that

are led by the nose by knaves to rail against the king and the government, and is mightily fond of being thought of a party. I have had hopes this twelve-month to have heard of his being in the Gate-house[1] for treason.

Sylv. But I find only yourself the prisoner all this while.

L. Dunce. At present indeed I am so; but fortune I hope will smile, wouldst thou but be my friend, Sylvia.

Sylv. In any mischievous design, with all my heart.

L. Dunce. The conclusion, madam, may turn to your satisfaction. But you have no thoughts of Courtine?

Sylv. Not I, I'll assure you, cousin.

L. Dunce. You don't think him well shaped, straight, and proportionable?

Sylv. Considering he eats but once a week, the man is well enough.

L. Dunce. And then he wears his clothes, you know, filthily, and like a horrid sloven.

Sylv. Filthily enough of all conscience, with a threadbare red coat, which his tailor duns him for to this day, over which a great, broad, greasy, buff-belt, enough to turn any one's stomach but a disbanded soldier; a peruke tied up in a knot, to excuse its want of combing; and then, because he has been a man at arms, he must wear two tuffles of a beard, forsooth, to lodge a dunghill of snuff upon, to keep his nose in good humour.

L. Dunce. Nay, now I am sure that thou lovest him.

Sylv. So far from it, that I protest eternally against the whole sex.

L. Dunce. That time will best demonstrate; in the mean while to our business.

[1] A well-known prison near the west end of Westminster Abbey, where political prisoners were confined.

Sylv. As how, madam?

L. Dunce. To-night must I see Beaugard; they are this minute at dinner in the Haymarket; now to make my evil genius, that haunts me everywhere, my thing called a husband, himself to assist his poor wife at a dead lift, I think would not be unpleasant.

Sylv. But 'twill be impossible.

L. Dunce. I am apt to be persuaded rather very easy. You know our good and friendly neighbour, Sir Jolly.

Sylv. Out on him, beast! he's always talking filthily to a body; if he sits but at the table with one, he'll be making nasty figures in the napkins.

L. Dunce. He and my sweet yoke-fellow are the most intimate friends in the world; so that partly out of neighbourly kindness, as well as the great delight he takes to be meddling in matters of this nature, with a great deal of pains and industry he has procured me Beaugard's picture, and given him to understand how well a friend of his in petticoats, called myself, wishes him.

Sylv. But what's all this to the making the husband instrumental? for I must confess, of all creatures, a husband's the thing that's odious to me.

L. Dunce. That must be done this night: I'll instantly to my chamber, take my bed in a pet, and send for Sir Davy.

Sylv. But which way then must the lover come?

L. Dunce. Nay, I'll betray Beaugard to him, show him the picture he sent me, and beg of him, as he tenders his own honour and my quiet, to take some course to secure me from the scandalous solicitations of that innocent fellow.

Sylv. And so make him the property, the go-between, to bring the affair to an issue the more decently.

L. Dunce. Right, Sylvia; 'tis the best office a

husband can do a wife; I mean an old husband. Bless us, to be yoked in wedlock with a paralytic, coughing, decrepit dotterel; to be a dry-nurse all one's life-time to an old child of sixty-five; to lie by the image of death a whole night, a dull immoveable, that has no sense of life but through its pains! the pigeon's as happy that's laid to a sick man's feet, when the world has given him over:[1] for my part, this shall henceforth be my prayer:—

Curst be the memory, nay double curst,
Of her that wedded age for interest first!
Though worn with years, with fruitless wishes full,
'Tis all day troublesome, and all night dull.
Who wed with fools, indeed, lead happy lives;
Fools are the fittest, finest things for wives:
Yet old men profit bring, as fools bring ease,
And both make youth and wit much better please.

[*Exeunt.*

[1] An old superstitious practice. Pepys makes mention of pigeons being placed at the feet of Catherine of Braganza, Charles II.'s queen, when she was dangerously ill.

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*The Street before Whitehall.*

Enter Sir JOLLY JUMBLE, BEAUGARD, COURTINE, *and* FOURBIN.

COUR. Sir Jolly is the glory of the age.

Sir Jol. Nay, now, sir, you honour me too far.

Beau. He's the delight of the young, and wonder of the old.

Sir Jol. I swear, gentlemen, you make me blush.

Cour. He deserves a statue of gold, at the charge of the kingdom.

Sir Jol. Out upon't, fie for shame! I protest I'll leave your company if you talk so. But faith they were pure whores, daintily dutiful strumpets: ha! uddsbud, they'd—have stripped for t'other bottle.

Beau. Truly, Sir Jolly, you are a man of very extraordinary discipline: I never saw whores under better command in my life.

Sir Jol. Pish, that's nothing, man, nothing; I can send for forty better when I please; doxies that will skip, strip, leap, trip, and do anything in the world, anything, old soul!

Cour. Dear, dear Sir Jolly, where and when?

Sir Jol. Odd! as simply as I stand here, her father was a knight.

Beau. Indeed, Sir Jolly! a knight, say you?

Sir Jol. Ay, but a little decayed: I'll assure you she's a very good gentlewoman born.

Cour. Ay, and a very good gentlewoman bred too.

Sir Jol. Ay, and so she is.

Beau. But, Sir Jolly, how goes my business forward? when shall I have a view of the quarry I am to fly at?

Sir Jol. Alas-a-day, not so hasty; soft and fair, I beseech you. Ah, my little son of thunder, if thou hadst her in thy arms now between a pair of sheets, and I under the bed to see fair play, boy; gemini! what would become of me? what would become of me? there would be doings! O lawd, I under the bed!

Beau. Or behind the hangings, Sir Jolly, would not that do as well?

Sir Jol. Ah no, under the bed against the world, and then it would be very dark, ha!

Beau. Dark to choose?

Sir Jol. No, but a little light would do well; a small glimmering lamp, just enough for me to steal a peep by; oh, lamentable! oh, lamentable! I won't speak a word more! there would be a trick! O rare! you friend, O rare! Odds-so, not a word more, odds-so, yonder comes the monster that must be the cuckold-elect; step, step aside and observe him; if I should be seen in your company, 'twould spoil all.

[*Exeunt* Sir JOLLY *and* COURTINE.

Beau. For my part, I'll stand the meeting of him; one way to promote a good understanding with a wife, is first to get acquainted with her husband. [*Retires.*

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Sir Dav. Well, of all blessings, a discreet wife is the greatest that can light upon a man of years: had I been married to anything but an angel now, what a beast had I been by this time! well, I am the

happiest old fool! 'tis a horrid age that we live in, so that an honest man can keep nothing to himself. If you have a good estate, every covetous rogue is longing for't (truly I love a good estate dearly myself); if you have a handsome wife, every smooth-faced coxcomb will be combing and cocking[1] at her: flesh-flies are not so troublesome to the shambles as those sort of insects are to the boxes in the play-house. But virtue is a great blessing, an unvaluable treasure: to tell me herself that a villain had tempted her, and give me the very picture, the enchantment that he sent to bewitch her! it strikes me dumb with admiration. Here's the villain in effigy. [*Pulls out the picture.*] Odd! a very handsome fellow, a dangerous rogue, I'll warrant him: such fellows as these now should be fettered like unruly colts, that they might not leap into other men's pastures. Here's a nose now, I could find it in my heart to cut it off. Damned dog, to dare to presume to make a cuckold of a knight!—bless us! what will this world come to? Well, poor Sir Davy, down, down on thy knees, and thank thy stars for this deliverance.

Beau. 'Sdeath! what's that I see? sure 'tis the very picture which I sent by Sir Jolly; if so, by this light, I am damnably jilted.

Sir Dav. But now if—

Beau. Surely he does not see us yet.

Four. See you, sir! why he has but one eye, and we are on his blind side; I'll dumb-found him.

[*Strikes him on the shoulder.*

Sir Dav. Who the devil's this? Sir, sir, sir, who are you, sir?

Beau. Ay, ay, 'tis the same; now a pox of all amorous adventures! 'sdeath, I'll go beat the impertinent pimp that drew me into this fooling.

Sir Dav. Sir, methinks you are very curious.

[1] *i.e.* Cocking his hat.

Beau. Sir, perhaps I have an extraordinary reason to be so.

Sir Dav. And perhaps, sir, I care not for you, nor your reasons neither.

Beau. Sir, if you are at leisure, I would beg the honour to speak with you.

Sir Dav. With me, sir? what's your business with me?

Beau. I would not willingly be troublesome, though it may be I am so at this time.

Sir Dav. It may be so too, sir.

Beau. But to be known to so worthy a person as you are, would be so great an honour, so extraordinary a happiness, that I could not avoid taking this opportunity of tendering you my service.

Sir Dav. [*Aside.*] Smooth rogue! who the devil is this fellow? But, sir, you were pleased to nominate business, sir; I desire with what speed you can to know your business, sir, that I may go about my business.

Beau. Sir, if I might with good manners, I should be glad to inform myself whose picture that is which you have in your hand; methinks it is a very fine painting.

Sir Dav. Picture, friend, picture! sir, 'tis a resemblance of a very impudent fellow; they call him Captain Beaugard, forsooth, but he is in short a rake-hell, a poor, lousy, beggarly, disbanded devil; do you know him, friend?

Beau. I think I have heard of such a vagabond: the truth on't is, he is a very impudent fellow.

Sir Dav. Ay, a damned rogue.

Beau. Oh, a notorious scoundrel.

Sir Dav. I expect to hear he's hanged by next sessions.

Beau. The truth on't is, he has deserved it long ago. But did you ever see him, Sir Davy?

Sir Dav. Sir!—does he know me? [*Aside.*

Beau. Because I fancy that miniature is very like him. Pray, sir, whence had it you?

Sir Dav. Had it, friend? had it? whence had it I? [*Aside.*] Bless us! [*Compares the picture with* BEAUGARD'S *face.*] what have I done now! this is the very traitor himself; if he should be desperate now, and put his sword in my guts!—slitting my nose will be as bad as that, I have but one eye left neither, and may be—Oh, but this is the King's Court; odd, that's well remembered; he dares not but be civil here. I'll try to out-huff him. Whence had it you?

Beau. Ay, sir, whence had it you? that's English in my country, sir.

Sir Dav. Go, sir, you are a rascal.

Beau. How!

Sir Dav. Sir, I say you are a rascal, a very impudent rascal; nay, I'll prove you to be a rascal, if you go to that—

Beau. Sir, I am a gentleman and a soldier.

Sir Dav. So much the worse; soldiers have been cuckold-makers from the beginning: sir, I care not what you are; for aught I know you may be a—come, sir, did I never see you? Answer me to that; did I never see you? for aught I know you may be a Jesuit; there were more in the last army beside you.

Beau. Of your acquaintance, and be hanged!

Sir Dav. Yes, to my knowledge there were several at Hounslow-heath, disguised in dirty petticoats, and cried brandy. I knew a sergeant of foot that was familiar with one of them all night in a ditch, and fancied him a woman; but the devil is powerful.

Beau. In short, you worthy villain of worship, that picture is mine, and I must have it, or I shall take an opportunity to kick your worship most inhumanly.

Sir Dav. Kick, sir!

Beau. Ay, sir, kick; 'tis a recreation I can show you.

Sir Dav. Sir, I am a free-born subject of England, and there are laws, look you, there are laws; so I say you are a rascal again, and now how will you help yourself, poor fool?

Beau. Hark you, friend, have not you a wife?

Sir Dav. I have a lady, sir—oh, and she's mightily taken with this picture of yours; she was so mightily proud of it, she could not forbear showing it me, and telling too who it was sent it her.

Beau. And has she been long a jilt? has she practised the trade for any time?

Sir Dav. Trade! humph, what trade? what trade, friend?

Beau. Why the trade of whore and no whore, caterwauling in jest, putting out Christian colours, when she's a Turk under deck. A curse upon all honest women in the flesh, that are whores in the spirit!

Sir Dav. Poor devil, how he rails! ha, ha, ha! Look you, sweet soul, as I told you before, there are laws, there are laws, but those are things not worthy your consideration: beauty's your business. But, dear vagabond, trouble thyself no further about my spouse; let my doxy rest in peace, she's meat for thy master, old boy; I have my belly-full of her every night.

Beau. Sir, I wish all your noble family hanged from the bottom of my heart.

Sir Dav. Moreover, Captain Swash, I must tell you my wife is a honest woman, of a virtuous disposition, one that I have loved from her infancy, and she deserves it by her faithful dealing in this affair, for that she has discovered loyally to me the treacherous designs laid against her chastity, and my honour.

Beau. By this light, the beast weeps! [*Aside.*

Sir Dav. Truly I cannot but weep for joy, to think how happy I am in a sincere, faithful, and loving

yoke-fellow. She charged me too to tell you into the bargain, that she is sufficiently satisfied of the most secret wishes of your heart.

Beau. I'm glad on't.

Sir Dav. And that 'tis her desire that you would trouble yourself no more about the matter.

Beau. With all my heart.

Sir Dav. But henceforward behave yourself with such discretion as becomes a gentleman.

Beau. Oh, to be sure, most exactly!

Sir Dav. And let her alone to make the best use of those innocent freedoms I allow her, without putting her reputation in hazard.

Beau. As how, I beseech you?

Sir Dav. By your impertinent and unseasonable address.

Beau. And this news you bring me by a particular commission from your sweet lady?

Sir Dav. Yea, friend, I do; and she hopes you'll be sensible, dear heart, of her good meaning by it: these were her very words, I neither add nor diminish, for plain-dealing is my mistress's friend.

Beau. Then all the curses I shall think on this twelvemonth light on her, and as many more on the next fool that gives credit to the sex!

Sir Dav. Well, certainly I am the happiest toad! How melancholy the monkey stands now! Poor pug, hast thou lost her?

Beau. To be so sordid a jilt, to betray me to such a beast as that! Can she have any good thoughts of such a swine? Damn her, had she abused me handsomely it had never vexed me.

Sir Dav. Now, sir, with your permission I'll take my leave.

Beau. Sir, if you were gone to the devil I should think you very well disposed of.

Sir Dav. If you have any letter, or other com-

mendation to the lady that was so charmed with your resemblance there, it shall be very faithfully conveyed by—

Beau. Fool!

Sir Dav. Your humble servant. Sir, I'm gone; I shall disturb you no further; your most humble servant, sir. [*Exit.*

Beau. Now poverty, plague, pox, and prison fall thick upon the head of thee!—Fourbin!

Four. Sir!

Beau. Thou hast been an extraordinary rogue in thy time.

Four. I hope I have lost nothing in your honour's service, sir.

Beau. Find out some way to revenge me on this old rascal, and if I do not make thee a gentleman—

Four. That you have been pleased to do long ago, I thank you; for I am sure you have not left me one shilling in my pocket these two months.

Beau. Here, here's for thee to revel withal.

[*Gives money.*

Four. Will your honour please to have his throat cut?

Beau. With all my heart.

Four. Or would you have him decently hanged at his own door, and then give out to the world he did it himself?

Beau. That would do very well.

Four. Or I think (to proceed with more safety) a good stale jakes[1] were a very pretty expedient.

Beau. Excellent, excellent, Fourbin!

Four. Leave matters to my discretion, and if I do not—

Beau. I know thou wilt; go, go about it, prosper, and be famous. [*Exit* FOURBIN.] Now ere I dare venture to meet Courtine again, will I go

[1] A privy.

by myself, rail for an hour or two, and then be good company. [*Exit.*

Enter COURTINE *and* SYLVIA.

Sylv. Take my word, sir, you had better give this business over. I tell you, there's nothing in the world turns my stomach so much as the man, that man that makes love to me. I never saw one of your sex in my life make love, but he looked so like an ass all the while, that I blushed for him.

Cour. I am afraid your ladyship then is one of those dangerous creatures they call she-wits, who are always so mightily taken with admiring themselves that nothing else is worth their notice.

Sylv. Oh, who can be so dull, not to be ravished with that roisterous mien of yours, that ruffling air in your gait, that seems to cry where'er you go, "Make room, here comes the captain!" that face which bids defiance to the weather? Bless us! if I were a poor farmer's wife in the country now, and you wanted quarters, how would it fright me! But as I am young, not very ugly, and one you never saw before, how lovingly it looks upon me!

Cour. Who can forbear to sigh, look pale, and languish, where beauty and wit unite both their forces to enslave a heart so tractable as mine is? First, for that modish swim of your body, the victorious motion of your arms and head, the toss of your fan, the glancing of the eyes—bless us! if I were a dainty fine-dressed coxcomb, with a great estate, and a little or no wit, vanity in abundance and good for nothing, how would they melt and soften me! but as I am a scandalous honest rascal, not fool enough to be your sport, nor rich enough to be your prey, how gloatingly they look upon me!

Sylv. Alas, alas! what pity 'tis your honesty should ever do you hurt, or your wit spoil your preferment!

Cour. Just as much, fair lady, as that your beauty should make you be envied at, or your virtue provoke scandal.

Sylv. Well, the more I look, the more I'm in love with you.

Cour. The more I look, the more I am out of love with you.

Sylv. How my heart swells when I see you!

Cour. How my stomach rises when I am near you!

Sylv. Nay, then let's bargain.

Cour. With all my heart; what?

Sylv. Not to fall in love with each other; I assure you, Monsieur Captain.

Cour. But to hate one another constantly and cordially.

Sylv. Always when you are drunk, I desire you to talk scandalously of me.

Cour. Ay, and when I am sober too; in return whereof, whene'er you see a coquette of your acquaintance, and I chance to be named, be sure you spit at the filthy remembrance, and rail at me as if you loved me.

Sylv. In the next place, whene'er we meet in the Mall, I desire you to "Humph!" put out your tongue, make ugly mouths, laugh aloud, and look back at me.

Cour. Which, if I chance to do, be sure at next turning to pick up some tawdry fluttering fop or another.

Sylv. That I made acquaintance withal at the music-meeting?

Cour. Right, just such another spark to saunter by your side, with his hat under his arm.

Sylv. Hearkening to all the bitter things I can say to be revenged.

Cour. Whilst the dull rogue dare not so much as grin to oblige you, for fear of being beaten for it, when he is out of his waiting.

Sylv. Counterfeit your letters from me.

Cour. And you, to be even with me for the scandal, publish to all the world I offered to marry you.

Sylv. O hideous marriage!

Cour. Horrid, horrid marriage!

Sylv. Name, name no more of it!

Cour. At that sad word let's part.

Sylv. Let's wish all men decrepit, dull, and silly.

Cour. And every woman old and ugly.

Sylv. Adieu!

Cour. Farewell!

Enter FRISK, *a young fellow affectedly dressed, several others with him.*

Sylv. Ah me, Mr. Frisk!

Frisk. Mademoiselle Sylvia! sincerely as I hope to be saved, the devil take me—damme, madam, who's that?

Sylv. Ha, ha, ha, hea! [*Exit with* FRISK.

Cour. True to thy failings always, woman! how naturally is the sex fond of a rogue! What a monster was that for a woman to delight in! Now must I love her still, though I know I'm a blockhead for't, and she'll use me like a blockhead too, if I don't prevent her. What's to be done? I'll have three whores a day, to keep love out of my head.

Re-enter BEAUGARD.

Beaugard, well met again; how go matters? handsomely?

Beau. Oh, very handsomely! had you but seen how handsomely I was used just now, you would swear so. I have heard thee rail in my time; would thou wouldst exercise thy talent a little at present!

Cour. At what?

Beau. Why, canst thou ever want a subject? rail at thyself, rail at me—I deserve to be railed at. See

there, what thinkest thou of that engine, that moving lump of filthiness, miscalled a man?

A clumsy fellow marches over the Stage, dressed like an Officer.

Cour. Curse on him for a rogue, I know him.

Beau. So.

Cour. The rascal was a retailer of ale but yesterday, and now he is an officer and be hanged; 'tis a dainty sight in a morning to see him with his toes turned in, drawing his legs after him, at the head of a hundred lusty fellows. Some honest gentleman or other stays now, because that dog had money to bribe some corrupt colonel withal.

Enter another, gravely dressed.

Beau. There, there's another of my acquaintance; he was my father's footman not long since, and has pimped for me oftener than he prayed for himself; that good quality recommended him to a nobleman's service, which, together with flattering, fawning, lying, spying and informing, has raised him to an employment of trust and reputation, though the rogue can't write his name, nor read his neck-verse,[1] if he had occasion.

Cour. 'Tis as unreasonable to expect a man of sense should be preferred, as 'tis to think a hector can be stout, a priest religious, a fair woman chaste, or a pardoned rebel loyal.

Enter two others, seeming earnestly in discourse.

Beau. That's seasonably thought on. Look there, observe but that fellow on the right hand, the rogue with the busiest face of the two; I'll tell thee his history.

[1] The verse of Scripture read by criminals to obtain benefit of clergy.

Cour. I hope hanging will be the end of his history, so well I like him at the first sight.

Beau. He was born a vagabond, and no parish owned him: his father was as obscure as his mother public; everybody knew her, and nobody could guess at him.

Cour. He comes of a very good family, Heaven be praised!

Beau. The first thing he chose to rise by was rebellion; so a rebel he grew, and flourished a rebel; fought against his king, and helped to bring him to the block.

Cour. And was he not religious too?

Beau. Most devoutly! he could pray till he cried, and preach till he foamed; which excellent talent made him popular, and at last preferred him to be a worthy member of that never-to-be-forgotten Rump Parliament.

Cour. Pray, sir, be uncovered at that, and remember it with reverence.

Beau. In short, he was a committee-man, sequestrator and persecutor-general of a whole county, by which he got enough at the king's return to secure himself in the general pardon.

Cour. Nauseous vermin! that such a swine, with the mark of rebellion in his forehead, should wallow in his luxury, whilst honest men are forgotten!

Beau. Thus forgiven, thus raised, and made thus happy, the ungrateful slave disowns the hand that healed him, cherishes factions to affront his master, and once more would rebel against the head which so lately saved his from a pole.

Cour. What a dreadful beard and swinging sword he wears!

Beau. 'Tis to keep his cowardice in countenance; the rascal will endure kicking most temperately for all that; I know five or six more of the same stamp,

that never come abroad without terrible long spits by their sides, with which they will let you bore their own noses if you please. But let the villain be forgotten.

Cour. His co-rogue I have some knowledge of; he's a tattered worm-eaten case-putter; some call him lawyer; one that takes it very ill he is not made a judge.

Beau. Yes, and is always repining that men of parts are not regarded.

Cour. He has been a great noise-maker in factious clubs these seven years, and now I suppose is courting that worshipful rascal, to make him recorder of some factious town.

Beau. To teach tallow-chandlers and cheesemongers how far they may rebel against their king by virtue of Magna Charta.

Cour. But, friend Beaugard, methinks thou art very splenetic of a sudden: how goes the affair of love forward? prosperously, ha?

Beau. Oh, I assure you most triumphantly; just now, you must know, I am parted with the sweet, civil, enchanted lady's husband.

Cour. Well, and what says the cuckold? is he very kind and good-natured, as cuckolds use to be?

Beau. Why, he says, Courtine, in short, that I am a very silly fellow—and truly I am very apt to believe him—and that I have been jilted in this affair most unconscionably. A plague on all pimps, I say; a man's business never thrives so well as when he is his own solicitor.

Enter Sir JOLLY JUMBLE *and a* Boy.

Sir Jol. Hist, hist! Captain! Captain! Captain!

Boy. Sir. [—Boy.

Sir Jol. Run and get two chairs[1] presently; be

[1] *i.e.* Sedan chairs.

sure you get two chairs, sirrah, do you hear? Here's luck, here's luck! now or never, captain; never if not now, captain! here's luck!

Beau. Sir Jolly, no more adventures, sweet Sir Jolly; I am like to have a very fine time on't truly.

Sir Jol. The best in the world, dear dog, the very best in the world; 'sbud, she's here hard by, man; stays on purpose for thee, finely disguised. The cuckold has lost her too; and nobody knows anything of the matter but I, nobody but I; and I, you must know, I am I, ha! and I, you little toad, ha!

Beau. You are a very fine gentleman.

Sir Jol. The best-natured fellow in the world, I believe, of my years! Now does my heart so thump for fear this business should miscarry: why, I'll warrant thee the lady is here, man; she's all thy own; 'tis thy own fault if thou art not in *terra incognita* within this half-hour: come along, pr'ythee come along; fie for shame! what, make a lady lose her longing! come along, I say, you—out upon't!

Beau. Sir, your humble, I shan't stir.

Sir Jol. What, not go?

Beau. No, sir, no lady for me.

Sir Jol. Not go! I should laugh at that, faith!

Beau. No, I will assure you, not go, sir.

Sir Jol. Away, you wag! you jest, you jest, you wag; not go, quoth-a?

Beau. No, sir, not go, I tell you; what the devil would you have more?

Sir Jol. Nothing, nothing, sir, but I am a gentleman.

Beau. With all my heart.

Sir Jol. And do you think then that I'll be used thus?

Beau. Sir!

Sir Jol. Take away my reputation, and take away my life: I shall be disgraced for ever.

Beau. I have not wronged you, Sir Jolly.

Sir Jol. Not wronged me! but you shall find you have wronged me, and wronged a sweet lady, and a fine lady—I shall never be trusted again! never have employment more! I shall die of the spleen.—Pr'ythee now be good-natured, pr'ythee be persuaded; odd, I'll give thee this ring, I'll give thee this watch, 'tis gold; I'll give thee anything in the world; go.

Beau. Not one foot, sir.

Sir Jol. Now that I durst but murder him!—Well, shall I fetch her to thee? what shall I do for thee?

Enter Lady DUNCE.

Odds fish! here she comes herself. Now, you ill-natured churl, now, you devil, look upon her; do but look upon her: what shall I say to her?

Beau. E'en what you please, Sir Jolly.

Sir Jol. 'Tis a very strange monster this! Madam, this is the gentleman, that's he, though, as one may say, he's something bashful, but I'll tell him who you are. [*Goes to* BEAUGARD.] If thou art not more cruel than leopards, lions, tigers, wolves, or Tartars, don't break my heart, don't kill me; this unkindness of thine goes to the soul of me. [*Goes to* Lady DUNCE.] Madam, he says he's so amazed at your triumphant beauty, that he dares not approach the excellence that shines from you.

L. Dunce. What can be the meaning of all this?

Sir Jol. Art thou then resolved to be remorseless? canst thou be insensible? hast thou eyes? hast thou a heart? hast thou anything thou shouldst have? Odd, I'll tickle thee! get you to her, you fool; get you to her, to her, to her, to her, ha, ha, ha!

L. Dunce. Have you forgot me, Beaugard?

Sir Jol. So now, to her again, I say! to her, to her, and be hanged! ah, rogue! ah, rogue! now, now,

have at her; now have at her! There it goes; there it goes, hey, boy!

L. Dunce. Methinks this face should not so much be altered, as to be nothing like what I once thought it, the object of your pleasure, and subject of your praises.

Sir Jol. Cunning toad! wheedling jade! you shall see now how by degrees she'll draw him into the whirlpool of love: now he leers upon her, now he leers upon her. O law! there's eyes! there's eyes! I must pinch him by the calf of the leg.

Beau. Madam, I must confess I do remember that I had once acquaintance with a face whose air and beauty much resembled yours; and, if I may trust my heart, you are called Clarinda.

L. Dunce. Clarinda I was called, till my ill-fortune wedded me; now you may have heard of me by another title: your friend there, I suppose, has made nothing a secret to you.

Beau. And are you then that kind enchanted fair one who was so passionately in love with my picture that you could not forbear betraying me to the beast your husband, and wrong the passion of a gentleman that languished for you, only to make your monster merry? Hark you, madam! had your fool been worth it, I had beaten him, and have a month's mind[1] to be exercising my parts that way upon your go-between, your male-bawd there.

Sir Jol. Ah Lord! ah Lord! all's spoiled again, all's ruined; I shall be undone for ever! Why, what a devil is the matter now? what have I done? what sins have I committed? [*Aside.*

L. Dunce. And are you that passionate adorer of our sex, who cannot live a week in London without loving? Are you the shark that sends your picture

[1] *i.e.* A strong inclination. The expression occurs in *Hudibras* and elsewhere.

up and down to longing ladies, longing for a pattern of your person?

Beau. Yes, madam, when I receive so good hostages as these are—[*Shows the gold*]—that it shall be well used. Could you find nobody but me to play the fool withal?

Sir Jol. Alack-a-day!

L. Dunce. Could you pitch upon nobody but that wretched woman that has loved you too well to abuse you thus?

Sir Jol. That ever I was born!

Beau. Here, here, madam, I'll return you your dirt; I scorn your wages, as I do your service.

L. Dunce. Fie for shame! what, refund? that is not like a soldier, to refund: keep, keep it to pay your sempstress withal.

Sir Jol. His sempstress! who the devil is his sempstress? Odd, what would I give to know that now! [*Aside.*

L. Dunce. There was a ring too, which I sent you this afternoon; if that fit not your finger, you may dispose of it some other way, where it may give no occasion of scandal, and you'll do well.

Beau. A ring, madam?

L. Dunce. A small trifle; I suppose Sir Davy delivered it to you, when he returned you your miniature.

Beau. I beseech you, madam!—

L. Dunce. Farewell, you traitor.

Beau. As I hope to be saved, and upon the word of a gentleman—

L. Dunce. Go, you are a false, ungrateful brute; and trouble me no more. [*Exit.*

Beau. Sir Jolly, Sir Jolly, Sir Jolly.

Sir Jol. Ah, thou rebel!

Beau. Some advice, some advice, dear friend, ere I'm ruined,

Sir Jol. Even two pennyworth of hemp for your honour's supper, that's all the remedy that I know.

Beau. But pr'ythee hear a little reason.

Sir Jol. No, sir, I ha' done; no more to be said, I ha' done; I am ashamed of you, I'll have no more to say to you; I'll never see your face again, good-b'w'ye. [*Exit.*

Beau. Death and the devil! what have my stars been doing to-day? A ring! delivered by Sir Davy—what can that mean? Pox on her for a jilt, she lies, and has a mind to amuse and laugh at me a day or two longer. Hist, here comes her beast once more; I'll use him civilly, and try what discovery I can make.

Re-enter Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Sir Dav. Ha, ha, ha! here's the captain's jewel; very well: in troth, I had like to have forgotten it. Ha, ha, ha!—how damnable mad he'll be now, when I shall deliver him his ring again, ha, ha!—Poor dog, he'll hang himself at least, ha, ha, ha!—Faith, 'tis a very pretty stone, and finely set: humph! if I should keep it now?—I'll say I have lost it—no, I'll give it him again o' purpose to vex him, ha, ha, ha!

Beau. Sir Davy, I am heartily sorry—

Sir Dav. O sir, 'tis you I was seeking for, ha, ha, ha!—What shall I say to him now to terrify him? [*Aside.*

Beau. Me, sir!

Sir Dav. Ay, you, sir, if your name be Captain Beaugard. [*Aside.*] How like a fool he looks already!

Beau. What you please, sir.

Sir Dav. Sir, I would speak a word with you, if you think fit.—What shall I do now to keep my countenance? [*Aside.*

Beau. Can I be so happy, sir, as to be able to serve you in anything?

Sir Dav. No, sir; ha, ha, ha! I have commands of service to you, sir. O Lord! ha, ha, ha!

Beau. Me, sir!

Sir Dav. Ay, sir! you, sir: but put on your hat, friend, put on your hat; be covered.

Beau. Sir, will you please to sit down on this bank?

Sir Dav. No, no, there's no need, no need; for all I have a young wife, I can stand upon my legs, sweetheart.

Beau. Sir, I beseech you.

Sir Dav. By no means; I think, friend, we had some hard words just now; 'twas about a paltry baggage; but she's a pretty baggage, and a witty baggage, and a baggage that—

Beau. Sir, I am heartily ashamed of all misdemeanour on my side.

Sir Dav. You do well; though are not you a damned whore-master, a devilish cuckold-making fellow? Here, here, do you see this? here's the ring you sent a-roguing; sir, do you think my wife wants anything that you can help her to? Why, I'll warrant this ring cost fifty pounds: what a prodigal fellow are you to throw away so much money! or didst thou steal it, old boy? I'll believe thou mayst be poor; I'll lend thee money upon't, if thou thinkest fit, at thirty in the hundred, because I love thee, ha, ha, ha!

Beau. Sir, your humble servant. I am sorry 'twas not worth your lady's acceptance. [*Aside.*] Now what a dog am I!

Sir Dav. I should have given it thee before, but, faith, I forgot it, though it was not my wife's fault in the least; for she says, as thou likest this usage, she hopes to have thy custom again, child. Ha, ha, ha!

Beau. Then, sir, I beseech you tell her, that you have made a convert of me, and that I am so sensible of my insolent behaviour towards her—

Sir Dav. Very well, I shall do it.

Beau. That 'tis impossible I shall ever be at peace with myself, till I find some way how I may make her reparation.

Sir Dav. Very good, ha, ha, ha!

Beau. And that if ever she find me guilty of the like offence again—

Sir Dav. No, sir, you had best not; but proceed; ha, ha, ha!

Beau. Let her banish all good opinion of me for ever.

Sir Dav. No more to be said: your servant; good b'w'ye.

Beau. One word more, I beseech you, Sir Davy.

Sir Dav. What's that?

Beau. I beg you tell her that the generous reproof she has given me has so wrought upon me—

Sir Dav. Well, I will.

Beau. That I esteem this jewel, not only as a wreck redeemed from my folly, but that for her sake I will preserve it to the utmost moment of my life.

Sir Dav. With all my heart, I vow and swear.

Beau. And that I long to convince her I am not the brute she might mistake me for.

Sir Dav. Right. [*Aside.*] Well, this will make the purest sport.—Let me see; first you acknowledge yourself to be a very impudent fellow?

Beau. I do so, sir.

Sir Dav. And that you shall never be at rest till you have satisfied my lady?

Beau. Right, sir.

Sir Dav. Satisfied her! very good; ha, ha, ha! and that you will never play the fool any more? Be sure you keep your word, friend.

Beau. Never, sir.

Sir Dav. And that you will keep that ring for her sake, as long as you live, ha?

Beau. To the day of my death, I'll assure you.

Sir Dav. I protest that will be very kindly done. And that you long, mightily long to let her understand that you are another guess fellow than she may take you for?

Beau. Exactly, sir, this is the sum and end of my desires.

Sir Dav. Well, I'll take care of your business, I'll do your business, I'll warrant you. [*Aside.*] This will make the purest sport when I come home!—Well, your servant; remember, be sure you remember: your servant. [*Exit.*

Beau. So, now I find a husband is a delicate instrument rightly made use of;—to make her old jealous coxcomb pimp for me himself! I think is as worthy an employment as such a noble consort can be put to.

Ah, were ye all such husbands and such wives,
We younger brothers should lead better lives. [*Exit.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*Outside* Sir DAVY DUNCE'S *House in Covent Garden.*

Enter SYLVIA.

YLV. To fall in love, and to fall in love with a soldier! nay, a disbanded soldier too; a fellow with the mark of Cain upon him, which everybody knows him by, and is ready to throw stones at him for.

Enter COURTINE.

Cour. Damn her! I shall never enjoy her without ravishing; if she were but very rich and very ugly, I would marry her. Ay, 'tis she; I know her mischievous look too well to be mistaken in it.—Madam.

Sylv. Sir.

Cour. 'Tis a very hard case, that you have resolved not to let me be quiet.

Sylv. 'Tis very unreasonably done of you, sir, to haunt me up and down everywhere at this scandalous rate; the world will think we are acquainted, shortly.

Cour. But, madam, I shall fairly take more care of my reputation, and from this time forward shun and avoid you most watchfully.

Sylv. Have you not haunted this place these two hours?

Cour. 'Twas because I knew it to be your ladyship's home, then, and therefore might reasonably be the place you least of all frequented; one would imagine you were gone a-coxcomb-hunting by this time, to some place of public appearance or other; 'tis pretty near the hour; 'twill be twilight presently, and then the owls come all abroad.

Sylv. What need I take the trouble to go so far a-fowling, when there's game enough at our own doors?

Cour. What, game for your net, fair lady?

Sylv. Yes, or any woman's net else, that will spread it.

Cour. To show you how despicably I think of the business, I will here leave you presently, though I lose the pleasure of railing at you.

Sylv. Do so, I would advise you; your raillery betrays your wit, as bad as your clumsy civility does your breeding.

Cour. Adieu!

Sylv. Farewell!

Cour. Why do not you go about your business?

Sylv. Because I would be sure to be rid of you first, that you might not dog me.

Cour. Were it but possible that you could answer me one question truly, and then I should be satisfied.

Sylv. Any thing for composition to be rid of you handsomely.

Cour. Are you really very honest? look in my face, and tell me that.

Sylv. Look in your face and tell you! for what? to spoil my stomach to my supper?

Cour. No, but to get thee a stomach to thy bed, sweetheart; I would if possible be better acquainted with thee, because thou art very ill-natured.

Sylv. Your only way to bring that business about effectually, is to be more troublesome; and if you think it worth your while to be abused substantially, you may make your personal appearance this night.

Cour. How? where? and when? and what hour, I beseech thee?

Sylv. Under the window, between the hours of eleven and twelve exactly.

Cour. Where shall these lovely eyes and ears
Hear my plaints, and see my tears?

Sylv. At that kind hour thy griefs shall end,
If thou canst know thy foe from thy friend.
[*Exit.*

Cour. Here's another trick of the devil now; under that window between the hours of eleven and twelve exactly! I am a damned fool, and must go: let me see; suppose I meet with a lusty beating: pish, that's nothing for a man that's in love; or suppose she contrive some way to make a public coxcomb of me, and expose me to the scorn of the world, for an example to all amorous blockheads hereafter? why, if she do, I'll swear I have lain with her; beat her relations, if they pretend to vindicate her; and so there's one love-intrigue pretty well over. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE *and* VERMIN.

Sir Dav. Go, get you in to your lady now, and tell her I am coming.

Ver. Her ladyship, right worshipful, is pleased not to be at home.

Sir Dav. How's that? my lady not at home! Run, run in and ask when she went forth, whither she is gone, and who is with her; run and ask, Vermin.

Ver. She went out in her chair presently after you this afternoon.

Sir Dav. Then I may be a cuckold still for aught I know: what will become of me? I have surely lost, and ne'er shall find her more; she promised me strictly to stay at home till I came back again; for aught I know she may be up three pair of stairs in the Temple now.

Ver. Is her ladyship in law then, sir?

Sir Dav. Or it may be taking the air as far as Knightsbridge, with some smooth-faced rogue or another. 'Tis a damned house, that Swan: that Swan at Knightsbridge is a confounded house, Vermin.

Ver. Do you think she is there then?

Sir Dav. No, I do not think she is there neither; but such a thing may be, you know: would that Barn-Elms was under water too! there's a thousand cuckolds a year made at Barn-Elms by Rosamond's Ponds:[1] the devil! if she should be there this evening my heart's broke.

Enter Sir JOLLY.

Sir Jol. That must be Sir Davy; ay, that's he, that's he, ha, ha, ha; was ever the like heard of? was ever anything so pleasant?

Sir Dav. I'll lock her up three days and three nights without meat, drink, or light; I'll humble her in the devil's name.

Sir Jol. Well, could I but meet my friend Sir Davy, it would be the joyfullest news for him—

Sir Dav. Who's there that has anything to say to me?

Sir Jol. Ah, my friend of friends, such news, such tidings!

Sir Dav. I have lost my wife, man.

Sir Jol. Lost her! she's not dead, I hope?

Sir Dav. Yes. Alas, she's dead, irrecoverably lost!

Sir Jol. Why, I parted with her within this half-hour.

Sir Dav. Did you so? are you sure it was she? where was it? I'll have my lord chief-justice's warrant and a constable presently.

[1] Rosamond's Pond (not Ponds) was at the S.W. side of St. James's Park. It was filled up more than a century ago.

Sir Jol. And she made the purest sport now with a young fellow, man, that she met withal accidentally.

Sir Dav. O Lord, that's worse and worse! a young fellow!—my wife making sport with a young fellow! O Lord! here are doings, here are vagaries! I'll run mad. I'll climb Bow-steeple presently, bestride the dragon, and preach cuckoldom to the whole city.

Sir Jol. The best of all was, too, that it happened to be an idle coxcomb that pretended to be in love with her, neighbour.

Sir Dav. Indeed! in love with her! who was it? what's his name? I warrant you won't tell a body—I'll indict him in the Crown-office; no, I'll issue warrants to apprehend him for treason upon the statute of Edward 19. Won't you tell me what young fellow it was? was it a very handsome young fellow, ha?

Sir Jol. Handsome? yes, hang him; the fellow's handsome enough: he is not very handsome neither, but he has a devilish leering black eye.

Sir Dav. O Lord!

Sir Jol. His face too is a good riding face; 'tis no soft effeminate complexion indeed, but his countenance is ruddy, sanguine, and cheerful; a devilish fellow in a corner, I'll warrant him.

Sir Dav. Bless us! what will become of me? Why the devil did I marry a young wife? Is he very well shaped too, tall, straight, and proportionable, ha?

Sir Jol. Tall? no, he's not very tall neither, yet he is tall enough too: he's none of your overgrown, lubberly Flanders-jades, but more of the true English breed, well-knit, able, and fit for service, old boy; the fellow is well shaped truly, very well proportioned, strong and active. I have seen the rogue leap like a buck.

Sir Dav. Who can this be? Well, and what think you, friend, has he been there? Come, come, I'm

sensible she's a young woman; and I am an old fellow—troth, a very old fellow, I signify little or nothing now. But do you think he has prevailed? am I cuckold, neighbour?

Sir Jol. Cuckold! what, a cuckold in Covent-garden! no, I'll assure you, I believe her to be the most virtuous woman in the world; but if you had but seen—

Sir Dav. Ay, would I had! what was it?

Sir Jol. How like a rogue she used him: first of all comes me up the spark to her. "Madam," says he—and then he bows down, thus. "How now," says she, "what would the impertinent fellow have?"

Sir Dav. Humph! ha! well, and what then?

Sir Jol. "Madam," says he again, bowing as he did before, "my heart is so entirely yours, that except you take pity on my sufferings I must here die at your feet."

Sir Dav. So, and what said she again, neighbour? ha!

Sir Jol. "Go, you are a fop."

Sir Dav. Ha, ha, ha! did she indeed? Did she say so indeed? I am glad on't, troth, I am very glad on't. Well, and what next? And how, and well, and what? ha!

Sir Jol. "Madam," says he, "this won't do; I am your humble servant for all this; you may pretend to be as ill-natured as you please, but I shall make bold."

Sir Dav, Was there ever such an impudent fellow?

Sir Jol. With that, "Sirrah," says she, "you are a saucy jackanapes, and I'll have you kicked."

Sir Dav, Ha, ha, ha! Well, I would not be unmarried again to be an angel.

Sir Jol. But the best jest of all was, who this should be at last.

Sir Dav. Ay, who indeed! I'll warrant you some silly fellow or other, poor fool!

Sir Jol. E'en a scandalous rakehell, that lingers up and down the town by the name of Captain Beaugard; but he has been a bloody cuckold-making scoundrel in his time.

Sir Dav. Hang him, sot, is it he? I don't value him this, not a wet finger, man. To my knowledge she hates him, she scorns him, neighbour; I know it, I am very well satisfied in the point; besides, I have seen him since that, and out-hectored him: I am to tell her from his own mouth, that he promises never to affront her more.

Sir Jol. Indeed!

Sir Dav. Ay, ay—

Enter Lady DUNCE, *paying her* Chairman.

Chair. God bless you, madam, thank your honour!

Sir Jol. Hush, hush! there's my lady. I'll be gone, I'll not be seen; your humble servant, God b'w'ye.

Sir Dav. No faith, Sir Jolly, e'en go into my house now, and stay supper with me, we ha'n't supped together a great while.

Sir Jol. Ha! say you so? I don't care if I do, faith, with all my heart; this may give me an opportunity to set all things right again. [*Aside.*

Sir Dav. My dear!

L. Dunce. Sir!

Sir Dav. You have been abroad, my dear, I see.

L. Dunce. Only for a little air; truly I was almost stifled within doors; I hope you will not be angry, Sir Davy, will you?

Sir Dav. Angry, child! no, child, not I; what should I be angry for?

L. Dunce. I wonder, Sir Davy, you will serve me at this rate. Did you not promise to go in my behalf to Beaugard, and correct him according to my instructions for his insolence?

Sir Dav. So I did, child; I have been with him,

sweetheart; I have told him all to a tittle; I gave him back again the picture too: but, as the devil would have it, I forgot the ring—faith, I did.

L. Dunce. Did you purpose, Sir Sodom, to render me ridiculous to the man I abominate? what scandalous interpretation, think you, must he make of my retaining any trifle of his, sent me on so dishonourable terms!

Sir Dav. Really, my lamb, thou art in the right; yet I went back afterwards, dear heart, and did the business to some purpose.

L. Dunce. I am glad that you did, with all my heart.

Sir Dav. I gave him his lesson, I'll warrant him.

L. Dunce. Lesson! what lesson had you to give him?

Sir Dav. Why, I told him as he liked that usage he might come again; ha, ha, ha!

L. Dunce. Ay, and so let him.

Sir Dav. With all my heart, I'll give him free leave, or hang me; though thou wouldst not imagine how the poor devil's altered. La you there now, but as certainly as I stand here, that man is troubled that he swears he shall not rest day nor night till he has satisfied thee; pr'ythee be satisfied with him if 'tis possible, my dear, pr'ythee do. I promised him, before I left him, to tell thee as much: for the poor wretch looks so simply, I could not choose but pity him, I vow and swear, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Jol. Now, now, you little witch! now, you chitsface! Odd, I could find in my heart to put my little finger in your bubbies.

L. Dunce. Sir Davy, I must tell you, that I cannot but resent your so soon reconcilement with a man that I hate worse than death, and that if you loved me with half that tenderness which you profess, you would not forget an affront so palpably and so basely offered me.

Sir Dav. Why, chicken, where's the remedy? What's to be done? How wouldst thou have me deal with him?

L. Dunce. Cut his throat.

Sir Dav. Bless us for ever! cut his throat! what, do murder?

L. Dunce. Murder! yes, anything to such an incorrigible enemy of your honour, one that has resolved to persist in abusing of you. See here this letter, this I received since I last parted with you; just now it was thrown into my chair by an impudent lackey of his, kept o' purpose for such employments.

Sir Dav. Let me see: a letter, indeed!—"For the Lady Dunce": damned rogue, treacherous dog, what can he say in the inside now? here's a villain!

L. Dunce. Yes, you had best break it open, you had so; 'tis like the rest of your discretion.

Sir Dav. Lady, if I have an enemy, it is best for me to know what mischief he intends me; therefore, with your leave, I will break it open.

L. Dunce. Do, do, to have him believe that I was pleased enough with it to do it myself: if you have the spirit of a gentleman in you, carry it back, and dash it, as it is, in the face of that audacious fellow.

Sir Jol. What can be the meaning of this now?

Sir Dav. A gentleman! yes, madam, I am a gentleman, and the world shall find that I am a gentleman.—I have certainly the best woman in the world. [*Aside.*

L. Dunce. What do you think must be the end of all this? I have no refuge in the world but your kindness: had I a jealous husband now, how miserable must my life be!

Sir Jol. Ah, rogue's nose! ah, devil! ah, toad! cunning thief, wheedling slut, I'll bite her by and by.

Sir Dav. Poor fool! No, dear, I am not jealous, nor never will be jealous of thee; do what thou wilt, thou

shalt not make me jealous: I love thee too well to suspect thee.

L. Dunce. Ah, but how long will you do so?

Sir Dav. How long? as long as I live, I warrant thee, I—don't talk to a body so: I cannot hold if thou dost, my eyes will run over, poor fool! poor birdsnies! poor lambkin!

L. Dunce. But will you be so kind to me to answer my desires? will you once more endeavour to make that traitor sensible that I have too just an esteem of you not to value his addresses as they deserve?

Sir Dav. Ay, ay, I will.

L. Dunce. But don't stay away too long, dear; make what haste you can; I shall be in pain till I see you again.

Sir Dav. My dear, my love, my babby, I'll be with thee in a moment. How happy am I above the rest of men! Neighbour, dear neighbour, walk in with my wife, and keep her company till I return again. Child, don't be troubled, pr'ythee don't be troubled. —Was there ever such a wife? well, da, da, da: don't be troubled, pr'ythee don't be troubled, pr'ythee don't be troubled, da, da.

[*Exeunt* Sir DAVY *and* VERMIN.

L. Dunce. Sir Jolly, Sir Jolly, Sir Jolly.

Sir Jol. Don't be troubled, pr'ythee don't be troubled, da, da.

L. Dunce. But, Sir Jolly, can you guess whereabout my wandering officer may be probably found now?

Sir Jol. Found, lady? he is to be found, madam—he is to be at my house presently, lady; he's certainly one of the finest fellows in the world.

L. Dunce. You speak like a friend, Sir Jolly.

Sir Jol. His friend, lady? no, madam, his foe, his utter enemy; I shall be his ruin, I shall undo him.

L. Dunce You may, if you please, then come both

and play at cards this evening with me for an hour or two; for I have contrived it so, that Sir Davy is to be abroad at supper to-night; he cannot possibly avoid it; I long to win some of the captain's money strangely.

Sir Jol. Do you so, my gamester? Well, I'll be sure to bring him, and for what he carries about him, I'll warrant you—odd, he's a pretty fellow, a very pretty fellow, he has only one fault.

L. Dunce. And what is that I beseech you, sir?

Sir Jol. Only too loving, too good-natured, that's all; 'tis certainly the best-natured fool breathing, that's all his fault.

L. Dunce. Hist, hist, I think I see company coming; if you please, Sir Jolly, we'll go in.

Enter BEAUGARD, *followed by* Sir DAVY *and* VERMIN.

Sir Jol. Mum, mum, mum, 'tis he himself, the very same; odds so, Sir Davy after him too! Hush, hush, hush, let us be gone, let us retire. Do but look upon him now, mind him a little; there's a shape, there's an air, there's a motion! Ah, rogue, ah, devil, get you in, get you in, I say. There's a shape for you!

[*Exit* Lady DUNCE.

Beau. What the devil shall I do to recover this day's loss again? my honourable pimp too, my pander knight has forsaken me; methinks I am quandaried, like one going with a party to discover the enemy's camp, but had lost his guide upon the mountains. Curse on him, old Argus is here again; there can be no good fortune towards me when he's at my heels.

Sir Dav. Sir, sir, sir, one word with you, sir! Captain, captain, noble captain, one word, I beseech you.

Beau. With me, friend?

Sir Dav. Yes, with you, my no-friend.

Beau. Sir Davy, my intimate, my bosom-physician!

Sir Dav. Ah, rogue! damned rogue!

Beau. My confessor, my dearest friend I ever had!

Sir Dav. Dainty wheedle, here's a fellow for ye!

Beau. One that has taught me to be in love with virtue, and shown me the ugly inside of my follies.

Sir Dav. Sir, your humble servant.

Beau. Is that all? if you are as cold in your love as you are in your friendship, Sir Davy, your lady has the worst time on't of any one in Christendom.

Sir Dav. So she has, sir, when she cannot be free from the impudent solicitations of such fellows as you are, sir.

Beau. As me, sir! why, who am I, good Sir Domine Doddlepate?

Sir Dav. So, take notice he threatens me; I'll have him bound to the peace instantly. Will you never have remorse of conscience, friend? have you banished all shame from your soul? Do you consider my name is Sir Davy Dunce? that I have the most virtuous wife living? do you consider that? Now how like a rogue he looks again! what a hang-dog leer was that!

Beau. Your virtuous wife, sir! you are always harping upon that string, Sir Davy.

Sir Dav. No, 'tis you would be harping upon that string, sir: see you this? cast your eyes upon this, this letter, sir. Did you not promise, this very day, to abandon all manner of proceedings of this nature, tending to the dishonour of me and my family?

Beau. Letter, sir! What the devil does he mean now? Let me see, "For the Lady Dunce"; this is no scrawl of mine, I'll be sworn; by Jove, her own hand! what a dog was I! forty to one but I had played the fool, and spoiled all again. Was there

ever so charming a creature breathing!—Did your lady deliver this to your hands, sir?

Sir Dav. Even her own self in person, sir, and bade me tell you, sir, that she has too just an esteem of me, sir, not to value such a fellow as you are as you deserve.

Beau. Very good: [*Reads*] "I doubt not but this letter will surprise you"—in troth, and so it does extremely—"but reflect upon the manner of conveying it to your hand as kindly as you can."

Sir Dav. Ay, a damned thief, to have it thrown into the chair by a footman.

Beau. [*Reads.*] "Would Sir Davy were but half so kind to you as I am!"

Sir Dav. Say you so, you insinuating knave?

Beau. [*Reads.*] "But he, I am satisfied, is so severely jealous, that except you contrive some way to let me see you this evening, I fear all will be hopeless."

Sir Dav. Impudent traitor! I might have been a monster yet, before I had got my supper in my belly.

Beau. [*Reads.*] "In order to which, either appear yourself, or somebody for you, half an hour hence in the Piazza, where more may be considered of. Adieu."

Sir Dav. Thanks to you, noble sir, with all my heart; you are come, I see, accordingly; but, as a friend, I am bound in conscience to tell you the business won't do; the trick won't pass, friend; you may put up your pipes, and march off. O Lord! he lie with my wife! pugh—he make Sir Davy Dunce a cuckold! poor wretch, ha, ha, ha!

Sir Jol. [*To* BEAUGARD] Hist, hist, hist!

Re-enter Lady DUNCE *and* FOURBIN *disguised.*

L. Dunce. That's he, there he is: succeed, and be rewarded.

Four. Other people may think what they please; but, in my own opinion, I am a very pretty fellow now; if my design but succeed upon this old baboon, I'll be canonized. Sir, sir, sir.

Sir Dav. Friend, with me? would you speak with me, friend?

Four. Sir, my commands were to attend your worship.

Sir Jol. Beaugard, Beaugard, hist, hist, here, here, quickly, hist. [*Exeunt* Sir JOLLY *and* BEAUGARD.

Sir Dav. Where do you live, sweetheart, and who do you belong to?

Four. Sir, I am a small instrument of the city, I serve the lord mayor in his office there.

Sir Dav. How, the lord mayor!

Four. Yes, sir, who desires you, by all means, to do him the honour of your company at supper this evening.

Sir Dav. It will be the greatest honour I ever received in my life. What, my lord mayor invite me to supper? I am his lordship's most humble servant.

Four. Yes, sir, if your name be Sir Davy Dunce, as I have the honour to be informed it is: he desires you moreover to make what haste you can, for that he has some matters of importance to communicate to your honour, which may take up some time.

L. Dunce. I hope it will succeed. [*Aside.*

Sir Dav. Communicate with me! he does me too noble a favour; I'll fly upon the wings of ambition to lay myself at his footstool. My lord mayor sends himself to invite me to supper; to confer with me too! I shall certainly be a great man.

Four. What answer will your worship charge me back withal?

Sir Dav. Let his lordship know that I am amazed and confounded at his generosity; and that I am so

transported with the honour he does me, that I will not fail to wait on him in the roasting of an egg.

Four. I am your worship's lowly slave. [*Exit.*

Sir Dav. Vermin, go get the coach ready; get me the gold medal too and chain, which I took from the Roman Catholic officer for a popish relic. [*Exit* VERMIN.] I'll be fine, I'll shine, and drink wine that's divine. My lord mayor invite me to supper!

L. Dunce. My dearest, I'm glad to see thee returned in safety, from the bottom of my heart: hast thou seen the traitor?

Sir Dav. Seen him! hang him, I have seen him: pox on him, seen him!

L. Dunce. Well, and what is become of him? where is he?

Sir Dav. Why dost thou ask me where he is? What a pox care I what becomes of him? Pr'ythee don't trouble me with thy impertinence; I am busy.

L. Dunce. You are not angry, my dear, are you?

Sir Dav. No, but I am pleased, and that's all one; very much pleased, let me tell you but that; I am only to sup with my lord mayor, that's all; nothing else in the world, only the business of the nation calls upon me, that's all; therefore, once more I say, don't be troublesome, but stand off.

L. Dunce. You always think my company troublesome; you never stay at home to comfort me; what think you I shall do alone by myself all this evening, moping in my chamber? Pray, my joy, stay with me for once.—I hope he won't take me at my word. [*Aside.*

Sir Dav. I say again and again, tempter, stand off; I will not lose my preferment for my pleasure; honour is towards me, and flesh and blood are my aversion.

L. Dunce. But how long will you stay then?

Sir Dav. I don't know; may be not an hour, may be all night, as his lordship and I think fit; what's that to anybody?

L. Dunce. You are very cruel to me.

Sir Dav. I can't help it; go, get you in, and pass away the time with your neighbour; I'll be back again before I die; in the mean time, be humble and conformable, go.

Re-enter VERMIN.

Is the coach ready?

Ver. Yes, sir.

Sir Dav. Well, your servant. What, nothing to my lady mayoress? You have a great deal of breeding indeed, a great deal! nothing to my lady mayoress?

L. Dunce. My service to her, if you please.

Sir Dav. Well, da, da—the poor fool cries, o' my conscience! adieu, do you hear, farewell. [*Exit.*

L. Dunce. As well as what I love can make me.

Re-enter Sir JOLLY JUMBLE.

Sir Jol. Madam, is he gone?

L. Dunce. In post-haste, I assure you.

Sir Jol. In troth, and joy go with him!

L. Dunce. Do you then, Sir Jolly, conduct the captain hither, whilst I go and dispose of the family, that we may be private. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* Sir DAVY DUNCE'S *House.*

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Sir Dav. Troth, I had forgot my medal and chain, quite, and clean forgot my relic; I was forced to come up these back stairs, for fear of meeting my

wife again; it is the troublesomest loving fool! I must into my closet, and write a short letter too; 'tis post-night, I had forgot that: well, I would not have my wife catch me for a guinea. [*Exit.*

Enter BEAUGARD *and* Lady DUNCE.

Beau. Are you very certain, madam, nobody is this way? I fancy, as we entered, I saw the glimpse of something more than ordinary.

L. Dunce. Is it your care of me, or your personal fears, that make you so suspicious? Whereabouts was the apparition?

Beau. There, there, just at the very door.

L. Dunce. Fie for shame! that's Sir Davy's closet; and he, I am satisfied, is far enough off by this time. I'm sure I heard the coach drive him away. But to convince you, you shall see now: Sir Davy, Sir Davy, Sir Davy. [*Knocking at the closet-door.*] Look you there, you a captain, and afraid of a shadow! Come, sir, shall we call for the cards?

Beau. And what shall we play for, pretty one?

L. Dunce. E'en what you think best, sir.

Beau. Silver kisses, or golden joys? Come, let us make stakes a little.

Enter Sir JOLLY JUMBLE, *unobserved.*

Sir Jol. Ah rogue, ah rogue! are you there? Have I caught you in faith, now, now, now? [*Aside.*

L. Dunce. And who shall keep them?

Beau. You, till Sir Davy returns from supper.

L. Dunce. That may be long enough; for our engine Fourbin has orders not to give him over suddenly, I assure you.

Beau. And is't to yourself, then, I'm obliged for this blest opportunity? Let us improve it to love's best advantage.

Sir Jol. Ah—ah! [*Aside.*

Beau. Let's vow eternal, and raise our thoughts to expectation of immortal pleasures: in one another's eyes let's read our joys, till we've no longer power o'er our desires, drunk with this dissolving. Oh!

Re-enter Sir DAVY DUNCE *from his closet.*

L. Dunce. Ah! [*Squeaks.*

Beau. By this light, the cuckold! Presto, nay, then halloo! [*Gets up, and runs away.*

Sir Dav. O Lord, a man—a man in my wife's chamber! Murder! murder! Thieves! thieves! shut up my doors! Madam! madam! madam!

Sir Jol. Ay, ay! Thieves! thieves! Murder! murder! Where, neighbour, where, where?

L. Dunce. [*Catches up* BEAUGARD'S *sword, which he had left behind him in the hurry, and presents it to* Sir DAVY.] Pierce, pierce this wretched heart hard to the hilts; dye this in the deepest crimson of my blood; spare not a miserable woman's life, whom Heaven designed to be the unhappy object of the most horrid usage man e'er acted.

Sir Dav. What, in the name of Satan, does she mean now?

L. Dunce. Curse on my fatal beauty! blasted ever be these two baneful eyes, that could inspire a barbarous villain to attempt such crimes as all my blood's too little to atone for: nay, you shall hear me—

Sir Dav. Hear you, madam! No, I have seen too much, I thank you heartily; hear you, quoth-a!

L. Dunce. Yes, and before I die too, I'll be justified.

Sir Dav. Justified, O Lord, justified!

L. Dunce. Notice being given me of your return, I came with speed to this unhappy place, where I have oft been blest with your embraces, when from

behind the arras out starts Beaugard; how he came there Heaven knows.

Sir Dav. I'll have him hanged for burglary; he has broken my house, and broke the peace upon my wife: very good.

L. Dunce. Straight in his arms he grasped me fast; with much ado I plunged and got my freedom, ran to your closet-door, knocked and implored your aid, called on your name; but all in vain—

Sir Dav. Ha!

L. Dunce. Soon again he seized me, stopped my mouth, and, with a conqueror's fury—

Sir Dav. O Lord! O Lord! no more, no more, I beseech thee; I shall grow mad, and very mad! I'll plough up rocks and adamantine iron bars; I'll crack the frame of nature, sally out like Tamberlane upon the Trojan horse, and drive the pigmies all like geese before me. O Lord, stop her mouth! Well, and how? and what then? stopped thy mouth! well! ha!

L. Dunce. No, though unfortunate, I still am innocent; his cursed purpose could not be accomplished; but who will live so injured? No, I'll die to be revenged on myself: I ne'er can hope that I may see his streaming gore; and thus I let out my own— [*Offers to run upon the sword.*

Sir Dav. Ha, what wouldst thou do, my love? Pr'ythee don't break my heart: if thou wilt kill, kill me; I know thou art innocent, I see thou art; though I had rather be a cuckold a thousand times, than lose thee, poor love, poor dearee, poor baby.

Sir Jol. Alack-a-day! [*Weeps.*

L. Dunce. Ah me!

Sir Dav. Ah, pr'ythee be comforted now, pr'ythee do; why, I'll love thee the better for this, for all this, mun; why shouldst be troubled for another's ill doings? I know it was no fault of thine.

Sir Jol. No, no more it was not, I dare swear. [*Aside.*

Sir Dav. See, see, my neighbour weeps too; he's troubled to see thee thus.

L. Dunce. Oh, but revenge!

Sir Dav. Why, thou shalt have revenge; I'll have him murdered; I'll have his throat cut before to-morrow morning, child: rise now, pr'ythee rise.

Sir Jol. Ay, do, madam, and smile upon Sir Davy.

L. Dunce. But will you love me then as well as e'er you did?

Sir Dav. Ay, and the longest day I live too.

L. Dunce. And shall I have justice done me on that prodigious monster?

Sir Dav. Why, he shall be crows'-meat by to-morrow night; I tell thee he shall be crows'-meat by midnight, chicken.

L. Dunce. Then I will live; since so, 'tis something pleasant:

When I in peace may lead a happy life
With such a husband—

Sir Dav. I with such a wife. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE 1.—*A Tavern.*

Enter BEAUGARD, COURTINE, *and* Drawer.

DRAW. Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome, sir; will you please to walk up one pair of stairs?

Beau. Get the great room ready presently; carry up too a good stock of bottles before-hand, with ce to cool our wine, and water to refresh our glasses.

Draw. It shall be done, sir.—Coming, coming here, coming: speak up in the Dolphin, somebody. [*Exit.*

Beau. Ah, Courtine, must we be always idle? must ve never see our glorious days again? when shall we e rolling in the lands of milk and honey; encamped n large luxuriant vineyards, where the loaded vines luster about our tents; drink the rich juice, just ressed from the plump grape; feeding on all the ragrant golden fruit that grow in fertile climes, and ipened by the earliest vigour of the sun?

Cour. Ah, Beaugard, those days have been, but ow we must resolve to content ourselves at an umble rate. Methinks it is not unpleasant to conider how I have seen thee in a large pavilion, rowning the heat of the day in champagne wines, parkling sweet as those charming beauties whose

dear remembrance every glass recorded, with half a dozen honest fellows more; friends, Beaugard; faithful hearty friends; things as hard to meet with as preferment here; fellows that would speak truth boldly, and were proud on't; that scorned flattery, loved honesty, for 'twas their portion; and never yet learned the trade of ease and lying: but now—

Beau. And now we are at home in our natural hives, and sleep like drones; but there's a gentleman on the other side the water,[1] that may make work for us all one day.

Cour. But in the meanwhile—

Beau. In the meanwhile patience, Courtine; that is the Englishman's virtue. Go to the man that owes you money, and tell him you are necessitated; his answer shall be "A little patience, I beseech you, sir." Ask a cowardly rascal satisfaction for a sordid injury done you; he shall cry, "Alas-a-day, sir, you are the strangest man living, you won't have patience to hear one speak." Complain to a great man that you want preferment, that you have forsaken considerable advantages abroad, in obedience to public edicts; all you shall get of him is this, "You must have patience, sir."

Cour. But will patience feed me, or clothe me, or keep me clean?

Beau. Pr'ythee no more hints of poverty: 'tis scandalous; 'sdeath, I would as soon choose to hear a soldier brag as complain. Dost thou want any money?

Cour. True, indeed, I want no necessaries to keep me alive; but I do not enjoy myself with that freedom I would do; there is no more pleasure in living at stint, than there is in living alone. I would have it in my power, when he needed me, to serve and assist my friend; I would to my ability deal handsomely too by the woman that pleased me.

[1] Louis XIV.

Beau. Oh, fie for shame! you would be a whore-master, friend; go, go, I'll have no more to do with you.

Cour. I would not be forced neither at any time to avoid a gentleman that had obliged me, for want of money to pay him a debt contracted in our old acquaintance: it turns my stomach to wheedle with the rogue I scorn, when he uses me scurvily, because he has my name in his shop-book.

Beau. As, for example, to endure the familiarities of a rogue that shall cock his greasy hat in my face, when he duns me, and at the same time vail it[1] to an over-grown deputy of the ward, though a frowzy fellmonger.

Cour. To be forced to concur with his nonsense too, and laugh at his parish-jests.

Beau. To use respects and ceremonies to the milch-cow his wife, and praise her pretty children, though they stink of their mother, and are uglier than the issue of a baboon; yet all this must be endured.

Cour. Must it, Beaugard?

Beau. And, since 'tis so, let's think of a bottle.

Cour. With all my heart, for railing and drinking do much better together than by themselves; a private room, a trusty friend or two, good wine and bold truths, are my happiness. But where's our dear friend and intimate, Sir Jolly, this evening?

Beau. To deal like a friend, Courtine, I parted with him but just now; he's gone to contrive me a meeting, if possible, this night, with the woman my soul is most fond of. I was this evening just entering upon the palace of all joy, when I met with so damnable a disappointment—in short, that plague to all well-meaning women, the husband, came unseasonably, and forced a poor lover to his heels, that was fairly making his progress another way, Courtine: the story thou shalt hear more at large hereafter.

[1] Take it off.

Cour. A plague on him, why didst thou not murder the presumptuous cuckold? saucy intruding clown, to dare to disturb a gentleman's privacies! I would have beaten him into sense of his transgression, enjoyed his wife before his face, and ha' taught the dog his duty.

Beau. Look you, Courtine, you think you are dealing with the landlord of your winter-quarters in Alsatia now. Friend, friend, there is a difference between a free-born English cuckold and a sneaking wittol of a conquered province.

Cour. Oh, by all means, there ought to be a difference observed between your arbitrary whoring, and your limited fornication.

Beau. And but reason: for, though we may make bold with another man's wife in a friendly way, yet nothing upon compulsion, dear heart.

Cour. And now Sir Jolly, I hope, is to be the instrument of some immortal plot; some contrivance for the good of thy body, and the old fellow's soul, Beaugard: for all cuckolds go to Heaven, that's most certain.

Beau. Sir Jolly! why, on my conscience, he thinks it as much his undoubted right to be pimp-master-general to London and Middlesex, as the estate he possesses is: by my consent his worship should e'en have a patent for it.

Cour. He is certainly the fittest for the employment in Christendom; he knows more families by their names and titles than all the bell-men within and without the walls.

Beau. Nay, he keeps a catalogue of the choicest beauties about town, illustrated with a particular account of their age, shape, proportion, colour of hair and eyes, degrees of complexion, gunpowder spots and moles.

Cour. I wish the old pander were bound to satisfy

my experience, what marks of good-nature my Sylvia has about her.

Enter Sir JOLLY JUMBLE.

Sir Jol. My captains! my sons of Mars and imps of Venus! well encountered; what, shall we have a sparkling bottle or two, and use Fortune like a jade? Beaugard, you are a rogue, you are a dog, I hate you; get you gone, go.

Beau. But, Sir Jolly, what news from paradise Sir Jolly? Is there any hopes I shall come there to-night?

Sir Jol. May be there is, may be there is not; I say let us have a bottle, and I will say nothing else without a bottle: after a glass or two my heart may open.

Cour. Why, then we will have a bottle, Sir Jolly.

Sir Jol. Will? we'll have dozens, and drink till we are wise, and speak well of nobody; till we are lewder than midnight whores, and out-rail disbanded officers.

Beau. Only one thing more, my noble knight, and then we are entirely at thy disposal.

Sir Jol. Well, and what's that? What's the business?

Beau. This friend of mine here stands in need of thy assistance; he's damnably in love, Sir Jolly.

Sir Jol. In love! is he so? In love! odds my life! Is she? what's her name? where does she live? I warrant you I know her: she's in my table-book, I'll warrant you: virgin, wife, or widow?

[*Pulls out a table-book.*

Cour. In troth, Sir Jolly, that's something of a difficult question; but, as virgins go now, she may pass for one of them.

Sir Jol. Virgin, very good: let me see; virgin, virgin, virgin; oh, here are the virgins; truly, I meet

with the fewest of this sort of any. Well, and the first letter of her name now? for a wager I guess her.

Cour. Then you must know, Sir Jolly, that I love my love with an S.

Sir Jol. S, S, S, oh, here are the Esses; let me consider now—Sappho?

Cour. No, sir.

Sir Jol. Selinda?

Cour. Neither.

Sir Jol. Sophronia?

Cour. You must guess again, I assure you.

Sir Jol. Sylvia?

Cour. Ay, ay, Sir Jolly, that's the fatal name; Sylvia the fair, the witty, the ill-natured; do you know her, my friend?

Sir Jol. Know her! why, she is my daughter, and I have adopted her these seven years. Sylvia! let me look. [*Reads.*] "Light brown hair, her face oval, and nose Roman, quick sparkling eyes, plump, pregnant, ruby lips, with a mole on her breast, and the perfect likeness of a heart-cherry on her left knee." Ah, villain! ah, sly-cap! have I caught you? are you there, i'faith? well, and what says she? Is she coming? do her eyes betray her? does her heart beat, and her bubbies rise, when you talk to her, ha?

Beau. Look you, Sir Jolly, all things considered, it may make a shift to come to a marriage in time.

Sir Jol. I'll have nothing to do in it; I won't be seen in the business of matrimony. Make me a match-maker, a filthy marriage-broker! sir, I scorn it, I know better things. Look you, friend, to carry her a letter from you or so, upon good terms, though it be in a church, I'll deliver it; or when the business is come to an issue, if I may bring you handsomely together, and so forth, I'll serve thee with all my soul, and thank thee into the bargain; thank thee heartily, dear rogue; I will, you little cock-sparrow, faith and

troth, I will: but no matrimony, friend, I'll have nothing to do with matrimony; 'tis a damned invention, worse than a monopoly, and a destroyer of civil correspondence.

Re-enter Drawer.

Draw. Gentlemen, your room is ready, your wine and ice upon the table; will your honours please to walk in?

Sir Jol. Ay, wine, wine, give us wine! a pox on matrimony—matrimony, in the devil's name!

Cour. But if an honest harlot or two chance to inquire for us, friend—

Sir Jol. Right, sirrah, if whores come never so many, give 'em reverence and reception, but nothing else; let nothing but whores and bottles come near us, as you tender your ears.

[*A door is opened, discovering a table, with bottles, &c.*

Beau. Why, there's, there's the land of Canaan now in little. Hark you, drawer, dog, shut, shut the door, sirrah, do you hear? Shut it so close that neither cares nor necessities may peep in upon us.

[*Exeunt* BEAUGARD, COURTINE, *and* Sir JOLLY.

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE, FOURBIN, *and* BLOODY-BONES.

Four. Bloody-Bones, be sure to behave yourself handsomely, and like your profession; show yourself a cut-throat of parts, and we'll fleece him.

Bloody-B. My lady says, we must be expeditious; Sir Jolly has given notice to the captain by this time, so that nothing is wanting but the management of this over-grown gull to make us hectors at large, and keep the whore Fortune under.

Draw. Welcome, gentlemen, very welcome, sir; will't please you to walk into a room? Or shall I wait upon your honour's pleasure here?

Sir Dav. Sweetheart, let us be quiet, and bring us wine hither. [*Exit* Drawer, *who returns with wine.*] So—[*sits down*]—from this moment, war, war, and mortal dudgeon against that enemy of my honour, and thief of my good name, called Beaugard. You can cut a throat upon occasion you say, friend?

Four. Sir, cutting of throats is my hereditary vocation; my father was hanged for cutting of throats before me, and my mother for cutting of purses.

Sir Dav. No more to be said; my courage is mounted like a little Frenchman upon a great horse, and I'll have him murdered.

Four. Sir! murdered you say, sir?

Sir Dav. Ay, murdered I say, sir; his face flayed off, and nailed to a post in my great hall in the country, amongst all the other trophies of wild beasts slain by our family since the Conquest; there's never a whore-master's head there yet.

Four. Sir, for that let me recommend this worthy friend of mine to your service; he's an industrious gentleman, and one that will deserve your favour.

Sir Dav. He looks but something ruggedly, though, methinks.

Four. But, sir, his parts will atone for his person; forms and fashions are the least of his study: he affects a sort of philosophical negligence indeed; but, sir, make trial of him, and you'll find him a person fit for the work of this world.

Sir Dav. What trade are you, friend?

Bloody-B. No trade at all, friend; I profess murder; rascally butchers make a trade on't; 'tis a gentleman's divertisement.

Sir Dav. Do you profess murder?

Bloody-B. Yes, sir, 'tis my livelihood: I keep a wife and six children by it.

Sir Dav. Then, sir, here's to you with all my heart. Would I had done with these fellows! [*Aside.*

Four. Well, sir, if you have any service for us, I desire we may receive your gold and your instructions as soon as is possible.

Sir Dav. Soft and fair, sweetheart; I love to see a little how I lay out my money. Have you very good trading now-a-days in your way, friend?

Bloody-B. In peaceable times a man may eat and drink comfortably upon't: a private murder done handsomely is worth money; but now that the nation's unsettled, there are so many general undertakers, that 'tis grown almost a monopoly; you may have a man murdered almost for little or nothing, and nobody e'er know who did it neither.[1]

Sir Dav. Pray what countryman are you? where were you born, most noble sir?

Bloody-B. Indeed, my country is foreign. I was born in Argier[2]; my mother was an apostate Greek, my father a renegado Englishman, who by oppressing of Christian slaves grew rich; for which, when he lay sick, I murdered him one day in his bed; made my escape to Malta, where, embracing the faith, I had the honour given me to command a thousand horse aboard the galleys of that state.

Sir Dav. O Lord, sir! my humble service to you again.

[1] This probably refers to the supposed murder, in 1678, of Sir Edmundsbury Godfrey, the magistrate before whom Titus Oates made his incredible depositions concerning the alleged Popish plot. Many believed it was a case of suicide. He was found pierced through with his own sword on Primrose Hill. But the infamous Bedloe, a convicted felon, and accomplice of Titus Oates, accused Queen Catharine's Catholic servants of murdering Godfrey in Somerset House, where the queen then resided, and so struck at the queen herself. Oates and he afterwards accused her of conspiring to murder the king. But Charles was not so mad and bad as to believe them. Godfrey had warned one of the denounced persons, Coleman, and the murder, if it was one, is now generally attributed to the Ultra-Protestant faction. At any rate, they used the incident to inflame the public mind against the Roman Catholics.

[2] Algiers.

Four. He tells you, sir, but the naked truth.

Sir Dav. I doubt it not in the least, most worthy sir.—These are devilish fellows, I'll warrant 'em. [*Aside.*

Four. War, friend, and shining honour has been our province, till rusty peace reduced us to this base obscurity. Ah, Bloody-Bones! ah, when thou and I commanded that party at the siege of Philipsburg, where, in the face of the army, we took the impenetrable half-moon!

Bloody-B. Half-moon, sir! by your favour 'twas a whole moon.

Four. Brother, thou art in the right; 'twas a full moon, and such a moon, sir!

Sir Dav. I doubt it not in the least, gentlemen; but, in the meanwhile, to our business.

Four. With all my heart, so soon as you please.

Sir Dav. Do you know this Beaugard? He's a devilish fellow, I can tell you that; he's a captain.

Four. Has he a heart, think you, sir?

Sir Dav. Oh, like a lion! he fears neither God, man, nor devil.

Bloody-B. I'll bring it you for your breakfast to-morrow. Did you never eat a man's heart, sir?

Sir Dav. Eat a man's heart, friend?

Four. Ay, ay, a man's heart, sir; it makes absolutely the best ragout in the world: I have eaten forty of 'em in my time without bread.

Sir Dav. O Lord, a man's heart! my humble service to you both, gentlemen.

Bloody-B. Why, your Algerine pirates eat nothing else at sea; they have them always potted up like venison: your well-grown Dutchman's heart makes an excellent dish with oil and pepper.

Sir Dav. O Lord, O Lord! friend, friend, a word with you: how much must you and your companion have to do this business?

Four. What, and bring you the heart home to your house?

Sir Dav. No, no, keeping the heart for your own eating.—I'll be rid of 'em as soon as possible I can. [*Aside.*

Four. You say, sir, he's a gentleman?

Sir Dav. Ay, such a sort of gentleman as are about this town: the fellow has a pretty handsome outside; but I believe little or no money in his pockets.

Four. Therefore we are like to have the honour to receive the more from your worship's bounty.

Bloody-B. For my part, I care for no man's bounty: I expect to have my bargain performed, and I'll make as good a one as I can.

Sir Dav. Look you, friend, don't you be angry, friend; don't be angry, friend, before you have occasion: you say you'll have—let's see how much will you have now—I warrant the devil and all, by your good will.

Four. Truly, Sir Davy, if, as you say, the man must be well murdered, without any remorse or mercy, betwixt Turk and Jew, 'tis honestly worth two hundred pounds.

Sir Dav. Two hundred pounds! why, I'll have a physician shall kill a whole family for half the money.

Bloody-B. Damme, sir, how do ye mean?

Sir Dav. Damme, sir, how do I mean? Damme, sir, not to part with my money.

Bloody-B. Not part, brother?

Four. Brother, the wight is improvable, and this must not be borne withal.

Bloody-B. Have I for this dissolved Circean charms?
Broke iron durance; whilst from these firm legs
The well-filed, useless fetters dropped away,
And left me master of my native freedom?

Sir Dav. What does he mean now?

Four. Truly, sir, I am sorry to see it with all my heart; 'tis a distraction that frequently seizes him, though I am sorry it should happen so unluckily at this time.

Sir Dav. Distracted, say you? is he so apt to be distracted?

Four. Oh, sir, raging mad; we that live by murder are all so; guilt will never let us sleep. I beseech you, sir, stand clear of him; he's apt to be very mischievous at these unfortunate hours.

Bloody-B. Have I been drunk with tender infants' blood,
And ripped up teeming wombs? Have these bold hands
Ransacked the temples of the gods, and stabbed
The priests before their altars? Have I done this? ha!

Sir Dav. No, sir, not that I know, sir; I would not say any such thing for all the world, sir. Worthy gentleman, I beseech you, sir—you seem to be a civil person—I beseech you, sir, to mitigate his passion. I'll do anything in the world; you shall command my whole estate.

Four. Nay, after all, sir, if you have not a mind to have him quite murdered, if a swingeing drubbing to bed-rid him, or so, will serve your turn, you may have it at a cheaper rate a great deal.

Sir Dav. Truly, sir, with all my heart; for methinks, now I consider matters better, I would not by any means be guilty of another man's blood.

Four. Why, then let me consider: to have him beaten substantially, a beating that will stick by him, will cost you—half the money.

Sir Dav. What, one hundred pounds! sure the devil's in you, or you would not be so unconscionable.

Bloody-B. The devil! where? where is the devil? show me;
I'll tell thee, Beelzebub, thou'st broke thy covenant;

Didst thou not promise me eternal plenty,
When I resigned my soul to thy allurements?

Sir Dav. Ah, Lord!

Bloody-B. Touch me not yet; I've yet ten thousand murders
To act before I'm thine: with all those sins
I'll come with full damnation to thy caverns
Of endless pain, and howl with thee for ever.

Sir Dav. Bless us! what will become of this mortal body of mine? Where am I? is this a house? do I live? am I flesh and blood?

Bloody-B. There, there's the fiend again! don't chatter so,
And grin at me; if thou must needs have prey,
Take here, take him, this tempter that would bribe me,
With shining gold,
To stain my hands with new iniquity.

Sir Dav. Stand off, I charge thee, Satan, where-soe'er thou art; thou hast no right nor claim to me; I'll have thee bound in necromantic charms. Hark you, friend, has the gentleman given his soul to the devil?

Four. Only pawned it a little; that's all.

Sir Dav. Let me beseech you, sir, to despatch, and get rid of him as soon as you can. I would gladly drink a bottle with you, sir, but I hate the devil's company mortally: as for the hundred pound here, it is ready; no more words, I'll submit to your good-nature and discretion.

Four. Then, wretch, take this, and make thy peace with the infernal king; he loves riches; sacrifice and be at rest.

Bloody-B. 'Tis done, I'll follow thee, lead on; nay, if thou smile, I more defy thee; fee, fa, fum. [*Exit.*

Four. 'Tis very odd, this.

Sir Dav. Very odd, indeed; I'm glad he's gone, though.

Four. Now, sir, if you please, we'll refresh ourselves with a cheerful glass, and so *chacun chez lui*— I would fain make the gull drunk a little, to put a little mettle into him. [*Aside.*

Sir Dav. With all my heart, sir; but no more words of the devil, if you love me.

Four. The devil's an ass, sir, and here's a health to all those that defy the devil.

Sir Dav. With all my heart, and all his works too.

Four. Nay, sir, you must do me right,[1] I assure you.

Sir Dav. Not so full, not so full, that's too much of all conscience: in troth, friend, these are sad times, very sad times; but here's to you.

Four. Pox o' the times! the times are well enough, so long as a man has money in his pocket.

Sir Dav. 'Tis true, here I have been bargaining with you about a murder, but never consider that idolatry is coming in full speed upon the nation. Pray what religion are you of, friend?

Four. What religion am I of, sir? Sir, your humble servant.

Sir Dav. Truly a good conscience is a great happiness; and so I'll pledge you, hemph, hemph. But shan't the dog be murdered this night?

Four. My brother rogue is gone by this time to set him, and the business shall be done effectually, I'll warrant you. Here's rest his soul.

Sir Dav. With all my heart, faith; I hate to be uncharitable.

Re-enter COURTINE *and* Drawer.

Cour. Look you, 'tis a very impudent thing not to be drunk by this time: shall rogues stay in taverns to sip pints, and be sober, when honest gentlemen are drunk by gallons? I'll have none on't.

[1] *i.e.* Drink to him.

Sir Dav. O Lord, who's there?

[*Sits up in his chair.*

Draw. I beseech your honour—our house will be utterly ruined by this means.

Cour. Damn your house, your wife and children, and all your family, you dog!—Sir, who are you?

[*To* Sir Davy.

Sir Dav. Who am I, sir? what's that to you, sir? Will you tickle my foot, you rogue?

Cour. I'll tickle your guts, you poltroon, presently.

Sir Dav. Tickle my guts, you mad-cap! I'll tickle your toby, if you do.

Cour. What, with that circumcised band? that grave hypocritical beard, of the reformation-cut? Old fellow, I believe you are a rogue.

Sir Dav. Sirrah, you are a whore, an arrant bitch-whore; I'll use you like a whore; I'll kiss you, you jade; I'll ravish you, you buttock; I am a justice of the peace, sirrah, and that's worse.

Cour. Damn you, sir, I care not if you were a constable and all his watch: what, such a rogue as you send honest fellows to prison, and countenance whores in your jurisdiction for bribery, you mongrel! I'll beat you, sirrah, I'll brain you; I'll murder you, you moon-calf! [*Throws the chair after him.*

Sir Dav. Sir, sir, sir! constable! watch! stocks! stocks! stocks! murder! [*Exit.*

Cour. Huzza, Beaugard!

Re-enter Beaugard *and* Sir Jolly Jumble.

Four. Well, sir, the business is done; we have bargained to murder you.

Beau. Murdered! who's to be murdered, ha, Fourbin?

Sir Jol. You are to be murdered, friend; you shall be murdered, friend.

Beau. But how am I to be murdered? who's to murder me, I beseech you?

Four. Your humble servant, Fourbin; I am the man, with your worship's leave: Sir Davy has given me this gold to do it handsomely.

Beau. Sir Davy! uncharitable cur; what! murder an honest fellow for being civil to his family! What can this mean, gentlemen?

Sir Jol. No, 'tis for not being civil to his family, that it means, gentlemen; therefore are you to be murdered to-night, and buried a-bed with my lady, you Jack Straw, you.

Beau. I understand you, friends; the old gentleman has designed to have me butchered, and you have kindly contrived to turn it to my advantage in the affair of love. I am to be murdered but as it were, gentlemen, ha? [*Exit* COURTINE.

Four. Your honour has a piercing judgment. Sir, Captain Courtine's gone.

Beau. No matter, let him go: he has a design to put in practice this night too, and would perhaps but spoil ours. But when, Sir Jolly, is this business to be brought about?

Sir Jol. Presently; 'tis more than time 'twere done already. Go, get you gone, I say. Hold, hold, let's see your left ear first, hum—ha—you are a rogue, you're a rogue; get you gone, get you gone, go.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Outside* Sir DAVY DUNCE'S *House.*

Enter SYLVIA *and her* Maid *in the Balcony.*

Maid. But why, madam, will you use him so inhumanly? I'm confident he loves you.

Sylv. Oh! a true lover is to be found out like a true saint, by the trial of his patience. Have you the cords ready?

Maid. Here they are, madam.

Sylv. Let them down, and be sure, when it comes to trial, to pull lustily. Is Will the footman ready?

Will. [*Within*] At your ladyship's command, madam.

Sylv. I wonder he should stay so long; the clock has struck twelve.

Enter COURTINE, *singing.*

And was she not frank and free,
And was she not kind to me,
To lock up her cat in her cupboard,
And give her key to me, to me?
To lock up her cat in her cupboard,
And give her key to me?

Sylv. This must be he: ay, 'tis he, and, as I am a virgin, roaring drunk; but, if I find not a way to make him sober—

Cour. Here, here's the window: ay, that's hell-door, and my damnation's in the inside. Sylvia, Sylvia, Sylvia! dear imp of Satan, appear to thy servant.

Sylv. Who calls on Sylvia in this dead of night,
When rest is wanting to her longing eyes?

Cour. 'Tis a poor wretch can hardly stand upright,
Drunk with thy love, and if he falls he lies.

Sylv. Courtine, is't you?

Cour. Yes, sweetheart, 'tis I; art thou ready for me?

Sylv. Fasten yourself to that cord there; there, there it is.

Cour. Cord! where? Oh, oh, here, here; so, now to Heaven in a string.

Sylv. Have you done?

Cour. Yes, I have done, child, and would fain be doing too, hussy.

Sylv. [*To* WILL, *within.*] Then pull away, hoa up, hoa up, hoa up! So, avast there, sir!

[COURTINE *is drawn halfway up to the balcony.*

Cour. Madam!

Sylv. Are you very much in love, sir?

Cour. Oh, damnably, child, damnably.

Sylv. I am sorry for't with all my heart: good-night, captain.

Cour. Ha, gone! what, left in Erasmus' paradise, between Heaven and hell? If the constable should take me now for a straggling monkey hung by the loins, and hunt me with his cry of watchmen? Ah, woman, woman, woman! Well, a merry life and a short, that's all.

[*Sings*] God prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and safeties all!

I am mighty loyal to-night.

Enter FOURBIN *and* BLOODY-BONES, *as from* Sir DAVY DUNCE'S *House.*

Four. Murder, murder, murder! help, help, murder!

Cour. Nay, if there be murder stirring, 'tis high time to shift for myself. [*Climbs up to the balcony.*

Sylv. [*Squeaking.*] Ah! [*Exeunt* SYLVIA *and* COURT.

Bloody-B. Yonder, yonder he comes; murder, murder, murder!

[*Exeunt* BLOODY-BONES *and* FOURBIN.

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Sir Dav. 'Tis very late; but murder is a melancholy business, and night is fit for't. I'll go home. [*Knocks.*

Ver. [*Within.*] Who's there?

Sir Dav. Who's there! open the door, you whelp of Babylon.

Ver. Oh, sir! you're welcome home; but here is the saddest news! here has been murder committed, sir.

Sir Dav. Hold your tongue, you fool, and go to sleep; get you in, do you hear? you talk of murder, you rogue? you meddle with state affairs? get you in. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*The Entrance Hall in the same.*

Sir JOLLY JUMBLE *and* Lady DUNCE *discovered putting* BEAUGARD *in order, as if he were dead.*

Sir Jol. Lie still, lie still, you knave, close, close, when I bid you: you had best quest,[1] and spoil the sport, you had!

Beau. But pray how long must I lie thus?

L. Dunce. I'll warrant you you'll think the time mighty tedious.

Beau. Sweet creature, who can counterfeit death when you are near him?

Sir Jol. You shall, sirrah, if a body desires you a little, so you shall; we shall spoil all else, all will be spoiled else, man, if you do not: stretch out longer, longer yet, as long as ever you can. So, so, hold your breath, hold your breath; very well.

Enter Maid.

Maid. Madam, here comes Sir Davy.

Sir Jol. Odds so, now close again as I told you, close, you devil; now stir if you dare; stir but any part about you if you dare now; odd, I'll hit you such a rap if you do! Lie still, lie you still.

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Sir Dav. My dear, how dost thou do, my dear? I am come.

L. Dunce. Ah, sir, what is't you've done? you've ruined me; your family, your fortune, all is ruined; where shall we go, or whither shall we fly?

Sir Dav. Where shall we go! why, we'll go to bed, you little jackadandy: why, you are not a wench, you rogue, you are a boy, a very boy, and I love you the better for't: sirrah, hey!

[1] Sporting dogs used to be called "questing hounds" (see Malory, for instance), and a hound may run forward in pursuit at the wrong moment. This is evidently the allusion here.

L. Dunce. Ah, sir, see there.

Sir Dav. Bless us! a man! and bloody! what, upon my hall-table!

L. Dunce. Two ruffians brought him in just now, pronouncing the inhuman deed was done by your command: Sir Jolly came in the same minute, or sure I had died with my distracting fears. How could you think on a revenge so horrid?

Sir Dav. As I hope to be saved, neighbour, I only bargained with them to bastinado him in a way, or so, as one friend might do to another: but do you say that he is dead?

Sir Jol. Dead, dead as clay; stark stiff and useless all, nothing about him stirring, but all's cold and still. I knew him a lusty fellow once, a very mettled fellow; 'tis a thousand pities!

Sir Dav. What shall I do? I'll throw myself upon him, kiss his wide wounds, and weep till blind as buzzard.

L. Dunce. Oh, come not near him; there's such horrid antipathy follows all murders, his wounds would stream afresh should you but touch him.[1]

Sir Dav. Dear neighbour, dearest neighbour, friend, Sir Jolly, as you love charity, pity my wretched case, and give me counsel; I'll give my wife and all my estate to have him live again; or shall I bury him in the arbour, at the upper end of the garden?

Sir Jol. Alas-a-day, neighbour, never think on't, never think on't; the dogs will find him there, as they scrape holes to bury bones in; there is but one way that I know of.

Sir Dav. What is it, dear neighbour, what is it? You see I am upon my knees to you; take all I have and ease me of my fears.

Sir Jol. Truly the best thing that I can think of

[1] An allusion to the common superstition that if the murderer touched the dead body the wounds would commence to bleed afresh.

is putting of him to bed, putting him into a warm bed, and try to fetch him to life again; a warm bed is the best thing in the world. My lady may do much too, she's a good woman, and, as I've been told, understands a green wound well.

Sir Dav. My dear, my dear, my dear!

L. Dunce. Bear me away! oh, send me hence far off, where my unhappy name may be a stranger, and this sad accident no more remembered to my dishonour!

Sir Dav. Ah, but my love! my joy! are there no bowels in thee?

L. Dunce. What would you have me do?

Sir Dav. Pr'ythee do so much as try thy skill; there may be one dram of life left in him yet. Take him up to thy chamber, put him into thy own bed, and try what thou canst do with him; pr'ythee do: if thou canst but find motion in him, all may be well yet. I'll go up to my closet in the garret, and say my prayers in the mean while.

L. Dunce. Will ye then leave this ruin on my hands?

Sir Dav. Pray, pray, my dear; I beseech you, neighbour, help to persuade her if it be possible.

Sir Jol. Faith, madam, do, try what you can do. I have a great fancy you may do him good; who can tell but you may have the gift of stroking? Pray, madam, be persuaded.

L. Dunce. I'll do whate'er's your pleasure.

Sir Dav. That's my best dear: I'll go to my closet and pray for thee heartily. Alas, alas, that ever this should happen! [*Exit.*

Beau. So, is he gone, madam, my angel?

Sir Jol. What, no thanks, no reward for old Jolly now? Come hither, hussy, you little canary-bird, you little hop-o'-my-thumb, come hither: make me a curtsey, and give me a kiss now, ha! give me a kiss,

I say; odd, I will have a kiss, so I will, I will have a kiss if I set on't. Shoogh, shoogh, shoogh, get you into a corner when I bid you, shoogh, shoogh, shoogh —what, there already? [*She goes to* BEAUGARD.] Well, I ha' done, I ha' done; this 'tis to be an old fellow now.

Beau. And will you save the life of him you've wounded?

L. Dunce. Dare you trust yourself to my skill for a cure? [Sir DAVY *appears at a window above.*

Sir Jol. Hist! hist! Close, close, I say again; yonder's Sir Davy, odds so!

Sir Dav. My dear! my dear! my dear!

L. Dunce. Who's that calls? my love, is't you?

Sir Dav. Ay, some comfort or my heart's broke! are there any hopes yet? I've tried to say my prayers, and cannot: if he be quite dead, I shall never pray again! Neighbour, no hopes?

Sir Jol. Truly little or none; some small pulse I think there is left, very little: there's nothing to be done if you don't pray: get you to prayers whatever you do. Get you gone; nay, don't stay now, shut the window, I tell you.

Sir Dav. Well, this is a great trouble to me; but good-night. [*Retires.*

Sir Jol. Good-night to you, dear neighbour.—Get ye up, get ye up, and begone into the next room presently, make haste. [*To* BEAUGARD *and* Lady DUNCE.] But don't steal away till I come to you; be sure ye remember, don't ye stir till I come—pish, none of this bowing and fooling, it but loses time; I'll only bolt the door that belongs to Sir Davy's lodgings, that he may be safe, and be with you in a twinkle. Ah—so, now for the door; very well, friend, you are fast.

[*Bolts the door and sings.*

Bonny lass, gan thoo wert mine,
And twonty thoosand poonds aboot thee, &c.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—SYLVIA'S *Chamber.*

COURTINE *discovered bound on a couch.*

OUR. Heigho! heigho! Ha! where am I? Was I drunk or no, last night? Something leaning that way. But where the devil am I? sincerely in a bawdy-house: faugh! what a smell of sin is here! Let me look about; if there be ever a Geneva Bible or a *Practice of Piety* in the room, I am sure I have guessed right. What's the matter now? tied fast! bound too! What tricks have I played to come into this condition? I have lighted into the territories of some merrily-disposed chambermaid or other; and she in a witty fit, forsooth, hath trussed me up thus: has she pinned no rags to my tail, or chalked me upon the back, trow? Would I had her mistress here at a venture!

Enter SYLVIA *and* Maid.

Sylv. What would you do with her, my enchanted knight, if you had her? you are too sober for her by this time: next time you get drunk, you may perhaps venture to scale her balcony like a valiant captain as you are.

Cour. Hast thou done this, my dear destruction? and am I in thy limbo? I must confess, when I am in my beer, my courage does run away with me now and then; but let me loose, and thou shalt see what

a gentle humble animal thou hast made me. Fie upon't! what, tie me up like an ungovernable cur to the frame of a table! let, let thy poor dog loose, that he may fawn and make much of thee a little.

Sylv. What, with those paws which you have been ferreting Moor-fields withal, and are very dirty still? After you have been daggling[1] yourself abroad for prey, and can meet with none, you come sneaking hither for a crust, do you?

Maid. Shall I fetch the whip and the bell, madam, and slash him for his roguery soundly?

Cour. Indeed, indeed! Do you long to be ferking[2] of man's flesh, madam flea-trap? Does the chaplain of the family use you to the exercise, that you are so ready for it?

Sylv. If you should be let loose, and taken into favour now, you would be for rambling again so soon as you had got your liberty.

Cour. Do but try me, and if ever I prove recreant more, let me be beaten and used like a dog in good earnest.

Sylv. Promise to grant me but one request, and it shall be done.

Cour. Hear me but swear.

Sylv. That anybody may do ten thousand times a-day.

Cour. Upon the word of a gentleman; nay, as I hope to get money in pocket.

Sylv. There I believe him, lelely.[3] You'll keep your word, you say?

Cour. If I don't, hang me up in that wench's old garters.

Sylv. See, sir, you have your freedom. [*Unbinds him.*

Cour. Well, now name the price; what I must pay for't?

[1] Getting bespattered while roving about.
[2] Whipping. [3] Truly.

Sylv. You know, sir, considering our small acquaintance, you have been pleased to talk to me very freely of love-matters.

Cour. I must confess, I have been something to blame that way; but if ever thou hearest more of it from my mouth after this night's adventure—would I were well out of the house!

Sylv. Have a care of swearing, I beseech you; for you must understand that, spite of my teeth, I am at last fallen in love most unmercifully.

Cour. And dost thou imagine I am so hard-hearted a villain as to have no compassion of thee?

Sylv. No, for I hope he's a man you can have no exceptions against.

Cour. Yes, yes, the man is a man, I'll assure you, that's one comfort.

Sylv. Who do you think it may be now? try if you can guess him.

Cour. Whoever he is, he's an honest fellow, I'll warrant him, and I believe will not think himself very unhappy neither.

Sylv. If a fortune of five thousand pounds, pleasant nights, and quiet days, can make him happy, I assure you he may be so; but try once to guess at him.

Cour. But if I should be mistaken?

Sylv. Why, who is it you would wish me to?

Cour. You have five thousand pound, you say?

Sylv. Yes.

Cour. Faith, child, to deal honestly, I know well enough who 'tis I wish for; but, sweetheart, before I tell you my inclinations, it were but reasonable that I knew yours.

Sylv. Well, sir, because I am confident you will stand my friend in the business, I'll make a discovery; and to hold you in suspense no longer, you must know I have a month's mind[1] to an arm-full of your

[1] A strong inclination.

dearly-beloved friend and brother captain ; what say you to't ?

Cour. Madam, your humble servant ; good-bye, that's all.

Sylv. What, thus cruelly leave a lady that so kindly took you in, in your last night's pickle, into her lodging? whither would you rove now, my wanderer?

Cour. Faith, madam, you have dealt so gallantly in trusting me with your passion, that I cannot stay here without telling you, that I am three times as much in love with an acquaintance of yours, as you can be with any friend of mine.

Sylv. Not with my waiting-woman, I hope, sir.

Cour. No, but it is with a certain kinswoman of thine, child ; they call her my Lady Dunce, and I think this is her house too ; they say she will be civil upon a good occasion, therefore, pr'ythee be charitable, and show the way to her chamber a little.

Sylv. What, commit adultery, captain ? fie upon't! what, hazard your soul ?

Cour. No, no, only venture my body a little, that's all ; look you, you know the secret, and may imagine my desires, therefore as you would have me assist your inclinations, pray be civil and help me to mine ; look you, no demurring upon the matter, no qualms, but show me the way—[*To the* Maid] or you, hussy, you shall do't ; any bawd will serve at present, for I will go. [*Exit* Maid.

Sylv. But you shan't go, sir.

Cour. Shan't go, lady ?

Sylv. No, shan't go, sir ; did I not tell you when once you had got your liberty, that you would be rambling again.

Cour. Why, child, wouldst thou be so uncharitable to tie up a poor jade to an empty rack in thy stable, when he knows where to go elsewhere, and get provender enough ?

Sylv. Any musty provender, I find, will serve your turn, so you have it but cheap, or at another man's charges.

Cour. No, child, I had rather my ox should graze in a field of my own, than live hide-bound upon the common, or run the hazard of being pounded every day for trespasses.

Sylv. Truly, all things considered, 'tis a great pity so good a husbandman as you should want a farm to cultivate.

Cour. Wouldst thou be but kind, and let me have a bargain in a tenement of thine, to try how it would agree with me!

Sylv. And would you be contented to take a lease for your life?

Cour. So pretty a lady of the manor, and a moderate rent!

Sylv. Which you'll be sure to pay very punctually?

Cour. If thou doubtest my honesty, faith, e'en take a little earnest beforehand.

Sylv. Not so hasty neither, good tenant. *Imprimis*, you shall oblige yourself to a constant residence, and not, by leaving the house uninhabited, let it run to repairs.

Cour. Agreed.

Sylv. Item, for your own sake you shall promise to keep the estate well fenced and inclosed, lest some time or other your neighbour's cattle break in and spoil the crop on the ground, friend.

Cour. Very just and reasonable, provided I don't find it lie too much to common already.

Sylv. Item, you shall enter into strict covenant not to take any other farm upon your hands, without my consent and approbation; or, if you do, that then it shall be lawful for me to get me another tenant, how and where I think fit.

Cour. Faith, that's something hard though, let me tell you but that, landlady.

Sylv. Upon these terms, we'll draw articles.

Cour. And when shall we sign them?

Sylv. Why, this morning, as soon as the ten o'clock office in Covent-garden is open.

Cour. A bargain; but how will you answer your entertainment of a drunken red-coat in your lodgings at these unseasonable hours?

Sylv. That's a secret you will be hereafter obliged to keep for your own sake; and for the family, your friend Beaugard shall answer for us there.

Cour. Indeed I fancied the rogue had mischief in his head, he behaved himself so soberly last night: has he taken a farm lately too?

Sylv. A trespasser, I believe, if the truth were known, upon the provender you would fain have been biting at just now.

Re-enter Maid.

Maid. Madam, madam, have a care of yourself: I see lights in the great hall; whatever is the matter, Sir Davy and all the family are up.

Cour. I hope they'll come, and catch me here: well, now you have brought me into this condition, what will you do with me, ha?

Sylv. You won't be contented for awhile to be tied up like a jade to an empty rack without hay, will you?

Cour. Faith, e'en take me, and put thy mark upon me quickly, that if I light into strange hands they may know me for a sheep of thine.

Sylv. What, by your wanting a fleece do you mean? If it must be so, come follow your shepherdess. Ba-a-a! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in* Sir DAVY DUNCE'S *House.*

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE *and* VERMIN.

Sir Dav. I cannot sleep, I shall never sleep again: I have prayed too so long, that were I to be hanged presently, I have never a prayer left to help myself: I was no sooner lain down upon the bed just now, and fallen into a slumber, but methought the devil was carrying me down Ludgate-hill a-gallop, six puny fiends with flaming fire-forks running before him like link-boys, to throw me headlong into Fleet-ditch, which seemed to be turned into a lake of fire and brimstone: would it were morning!

Ver. Truly, sir, it has been a very dismal night.

Sir Dav. But didst thou meet never a white thing upon the stairs?

Ver. No, sir, not I; but methoughts I saw our great dog Towzer, with his brass collar on, stand at the cellar-door as I came along the old entry.

Sir Dav. It could never be: Towzer has a chain; had this thing a chain on?

Ver. No, sir, no chain, but it had Towzer's eyes for all the world.

Sir Dav. What, ugly, great, frightful eyes?

Ver. Ay, ay, huge saucer eyes, but mightily like Towzer's.

Sir Dav. O Lord! O Lord! hark! hark!

Ver. What? what I beseech you, sir?

Sir Dav. What's that upon the stairs? Didst thou hear nothing? Hist, hark, pat, pat, pat, hark, hey!

Ver. Hear nothing! where, sir?

Sir Dav. Look! look! what's that? what's that in the corner there?

Ver. Where?

Sir Dav. There.

Ver. What, upon the iron chest?

Sir Dav. No, the long black thing up by the old

clock-case. See! see! now it stirs, and is coming this way.

Ver. Alas, sir, speak to it—you are a justice o' peace—I beseech you. I dare not stay in the house: I'll call the watch, and tell 'em hell's broke loose; what shall I do? oh! [*Exit.*

Sir Dav. O Vermin, if thou art a true servant, have pity on thy master, and do not forsake me in this distressed condition. Satan, begone! I defy thee. I'll repent and be saved, I'll say my prayers, I'll go to church; help! help! help! Was there anything or no? in what hole shall I hide myself? [*Exit.*

Enter Sir JOLLY, FOURBIN, *and* BLOODY-BONES.

Sir Jol. That should be Sir Davy's voice; the waiting-woman, indeed, told me he was afraid and could not sleep. Pretty fellows, pretty fellows both; you've done your business handsomely; what, I'll warrant you have been a-whoring together now; ha! You do well, you do well, I like you the better for't; what's o'clock?

Four. Near four, sir; 'twill not be day yet these two hours.

Sir Jol. Very well, but how got ye into the house?

Four. A ragged retainer of the family, Vermin I think they call him, let us in as physicians sent for by your order.

Sir Jol. Excellent rogues! and then I hope all things are ready, as I gave directions?

Four. To a tittle, sir; there shall not be a more critical observer of your worship's pleasure than your humble servant the Chevalier Fourbin.

Sir Jol. Get you gone, you rogue, you have a sharp nose, and are a nimble fellow; I have no more to say to you, stand aside, and be ready when I call: here he comes; hist, hem, hem, hem.

[*Exeunt* FOURBIN *and* BLOODY-BONES.

Re-enter Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Sir Dav. Ha! what art thou?
Approach thou like the rugged Bankside bear,
The East-cheap bull, or monster shown in fair,—
Take any shape but that, and I'll confront thee!

Sir Jol. Alas, unhappy man! I am thy friend.

Sir Dav. Thou canst not be my friend, for I defy thee. Sir Jolly! neighbour! ha! is it you? are you sure it is you? are you yourself? if you be, give me your hand. Alas-a-day, I ha' seen the devil.

Sir Jol. The devil, neighbour?

Sir Dav. Ay, ay, there's no help for't; at first I fancied it was a young white bear's cub dancing in the shadow of my candle; then it was turned to a pair of blue breeches with wooden legs on, stamped about the room, as if all the cripples in town had kept their rendezvous there; when all of a sudden, it appeared like a leathern serpent, and with a dreadful clap of thunder flew out of the window.

Sir Jol. Thunder! why, I heard no thunder.

Sir Dav. That may be too; what, were you asleep?

Sir Jol. Asleep, quoth-a? no, no; no sleeping this night for me, I assure you.

Sir Dav. Well, what's the best news then? How does the man?

Sir Jol. Even as he did before he was born nothing at all; he's dead.

Sir Dav. Dead! what, quite dead?

Sir Jol. As good as dead, if not quite dead; 'twas a horrid murder! and then the terror of conscience, neighbour.

Sir Dav. And truly I have a very terrified one, friend, though I never found I had any conscience at all till now. Pray whereabout was his death's-wound?

Sir Jol. Just here, just under his left pap, a dreadful gash.

Sir Dav. So very wide?

Sir Jol. Oh, as wide as my hat; you might have seen his lungs, liver, and heart, as perfectly as if you had been in his belly.

Sir Dav. Is there no way to have him privately buried, and conceal this murder? Must I needs be hanged by the neck like a dog, neighbour? Do I look as if I would be hanged?

Sir Jol. Truly, Sir Davy, I must deal faithfully with you, you do look a little suspiciously at present; but have you seen the devil, say you?

Sir Dav. Ay, surely it was the devil, nothing else could have frighted me so.

Sir Jol. Bless us, and guard us all the angels! what's that?

Sir Dav. "Potestati sempiternæ cujus benevolentiâ servantur gentes, et cujus misericordiâ"—

[*Kneels, holding up his hands, and muttering as if he prayed.*

Sir Jol. Neighbour, where are you, friend, Sir Davy?

Sir Dav. Ah, whatever you do, be sure to stand close to me: where, where is it?

Sir Jol. Just, just there, in the shape of a coach and six horses against the wall.

Sir Dav. Deliver us all! he won't carry me away in that coach and six, will he?

Sir Jol. Do you see it? [*Exit.*

Sir Dav. See it! plain, plain: dear friend, advise me what I shall do: Sir Jolly, Sir Jolly, do you hear nothing? Sir Jolly—ha! has he left me alone, Vermin?

Ver. Sir.

Sir Dav. Am I alive? Dost thou know me again? Am I thy quondam master, Sir Davy Dunce?

Ver. I hope I shall never forget you, sir.

Sir Dav. Didst thou see nothing?

Ver. Yes, sir, methought the house was all a-fire, as it were.

Sir Dav. Didst thou not see how the devils grinned and gnashed their teeth at me, Vermin?

Ver. Alas, sir, I was afraid one of 'em would have bit off my nose, as he vanished out of the door.

Sir Dav. Lead me away, I'll go to my wife, I'll die by my own dear wife. Run away to the Temple, and call Counsellor, my lawyer; I'll make over my estate presently, I shan't live till noon; I'll give all I have to my wife. Ha, Vermin!

Ver. Truly, sir, she's a very good lady.

Sir Dav. Ah, much, much too good for me, Vermin; thou canst not imagine what she has done for me, man; she would break her heart if I should give any thing away from her, she loves me so dearly. Yet if I do die, thou shalt have all my old shoes.

Ver. I hope to see you live many a fair day yet though.

Sir Dav. Ah, my wife, my poor wife! lead me to my poor wife. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—Lady DUNCE's *Chamber.*

Lady DUNCE *and* BEAUGARD *discovered.*

L. Dunce. What think you now of a cold wet march over the mountains, your men tired, your baggage not come up, but at night a dirty watery plain to encamp upon, and nothing to shelter you, but an old leaguer cloak as tattered as your colours? Is not this much better, now, than lying wet, and getting the sciatica?

Beau. The hopes of this made all fatigue easy to me; the thoughts of Clarinda have a thousand times refreshed me in my solitude. Whene'er I marched,

I fancied still it was to my Clarinda; when I fought, I imagined it was for my Clarinda; but when I came home, and found Clarinda lost!—How could you think of wasting but a night in the rank, surfeiting arms of this foul-feeding monster, this rotten trunk of a man, that lays claim to you?

L. Dunce. The persuasion of friends, and the authority of parents.

Beau. And had you no more grace than to be ruled by a father and mother?

L. Dunce. When you were gone, that should have given me better counsel, how could I help myself?

Beau. Methinks, then, you might have found out some cleanlier shift to have thrown away yourself upon than nauseous old age, and unwholesome deformity.

L. Dunce. What, upon some over-grown, full-fed country fool, with a horse-face, a great ugly head, and a great fine estate; one that should have been drained and squeezed, and jolted up and down the town in hackneys with cheats and hectors, and so sent home at three o'clock every morning, like a lolling booby, stinking, with a belly-full of stummed wine,[1] and nothing in's pockets?

Beau. You might have made a tractable beast of such a one; he would have been young enough for training.

L. Dunce. Is youth then so gentle, if age be stubborn? Young men, like springs wrought by a subtle workman, easily ply to what their wishes press them; but the desire once gone that kept them down, they soon start straight again, and no sign's left which way they bent before.

Sir Jol. [*At the door peeping.*] So, so, who says I see anything now? I see nothing, not I; I don't see, I don't see, I don't look, not so much as look, not I. [*He enters.*

[1] Strong new wine.

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Sir Dav. I will have my wife, carry me to my wife let me go to my wife, I'll live and die with my wife, let the devil do his worst; ah, my wife, my wife, my wife!

L. Dunce. [*To* BEAUGARD.] Alas! alas! we are ruined! shift for yourself; counterfeit the dead corpse once more, or anything.

Sir Dav. Ha! whosoe'er thou art thou canst not eat me! speak to me, who has done this? Thou canst not say I did it.

Sir Jol. Did it? did what? Here's nobody says you did anything that I know, neighbour; what's the matter with you? what ails you? whither do you go? whither do you run? I tell you here's nobody says a word to you.

Sir Dav. Did you not see the ghost just now?

Sir Jol. Ghost! pr'ythee now, here's no ghost; whither would you go? I tell you, you shall not stir one foot farther, man; the devil take me if you do. Ghost! pr'ythee, here's no ghost at all; a little flesh and blood, indeed, there is, some old, some young, some alive, some dead, and so forth; but ghost! pish, here's no ghost.

Sir Dav. But, sir, if I say I did see a ghost, I did see a ghost, an you go to that; why, sure I know a ghost when I see one. Ah, my dear, if thou hadst but seen the devil half so often as I have seen him!

L. Dunce. Alas, Sir Davy! if you ever loved me, come not, oh, come not near me; I have resolved to waste the short remainder of my life in penitence, and taste of joys no more.

Sir Dav. Alas, my poor child! But do you think there was no ghost indeed?

Sir Jol. Ghost! Alas-a-day, what should a ghost do here?

Sir Dav. And is the man dead?

Sir Jol. Dead! ay, ay, stark dead, he's stiff by this time.

L. Dunce. Here you may see the horrid ghastly spectacle, the sad effects of my too rigid virtue, and your too fierce resentment—

Sir Jol. Do you see there?

Sir Dav. Ay, ay, I do see; would I had never seen him; would he had lain with my wife in every house between Charing Cross and Aldgate, so this had never happened!

Sir Jol. In truth, and would he had! but we are all mortal, neighbour, all mortal; to-day we are here, to-morrow gone; like the shadow that vanisheth, like the grass that withereth, or like the flower that fadeth; or indeed like anything, or rather like nothing: but we are all mortal.

Sir Dav. Heigh!

L. Dunce. Down, down that trap-door, it goes into a bathing-room; for the rest, leave it to my conduct.

[BEAUGARD *descends.*

Sir Jol. 'Tis very unfortunate that you should run yourself into this *premunire*,[1] Sir Davy.

Sir Dav. Indeed, and so it is.

Sir Jol. For a gentleman, a man in authority, a person in years, one that used to go to church with his neighbours.

Sir Dav. Every Sunday truly, Sir Jolly.

Sir Jol. Pay scot and lot to the parish.

Sir Dav. Six pounds a year to the very poor, without abatement or deduction: 'tis very hard if so good a commonwealth's-man should be brought to ride in a cart at last, and be hanged in a sunshiny morning to make butchers and suburb apprentices a holiday; I'll e'en run away.

Sir Jol. Run away! why then your estate will be forfeited; you'll lose your estate, man.

[1] A writ in common law, penalty, difficulty.

Sir Dav. Truly you say right, friend; and a man had better be half-hanged than lose his estate, you know.

Sir Jol. Hanged! no, no, I think there's no great fear of hanging neither: what, the fellow was but a sort of an unaccountable fellow, as I heard you say.

Sir Dav. Ay, ay, pox on him, he was a soldierly sort of a vagabond; he had little or nothing but his sins to live upon: if I could have had but patience, he would have been hanged within these two months, and all this mischief saved.

[BEAUGARD *rises up like a ghost at the trap-door, just before* Sir DAVY.

O Lord! the devil, the devil, the devil!

[*Falls upon his face.*

Sir Jol. Why, Sir Davy, Sir Davy, what ails you? what's the matter with you?

Sir Dav. Let me alone, let me lie still; I will not look up to see an angel; oh-h-h!

L. Dunce. My dear, why do you do these cruel things to affright me? Pray rise and speak to me.

Sir Dav. I dare not stir; I saw the ghost again just now.

L. Dunce. Ghost again! what ghost? where?

Sir Dav. Why, there! there!

Sir Jol. Here has been no ghost.

Sir Dav. Why, did you see nothing then?

L. Dunce. See nothing! no, nothing but one another.

Sir Dav. Then I am enchanted, or my end is near at hand, neighbour; for Heaven's sake, neighbour, advise me what I shall do to be at rest.

Sir Jol. Do! why, what think you if the body were removed?

Sir Dav. Removed! I'd give a hundred pound the body were out of my house; may be then the devil would not be so impudent.

Sir Jol. I have discovered a door-place in the wall

betwixt my lady's chamber and one that belongs to me; if you think fit we'll beat it down, and remove this troublesome lump of earth to my house.

Sir Dav. But will you be so kind?

Sir Jol. If you think it may by any means be serviceable to you.

Sir Dav. Truly, if the body were removed, and disposed of privately, that no more might be heard of the matter—I hope he'll be as good as his word. [*Aside.*

Sir Jol. Fear nothing, I'll warrant you; but in troth I had utterly forgot one thing, utterly forgot it.

Sir Dav. What's that?

Sir Jol. Why, it will be absolutely necessary that your lady stayed with me at my house for one day, till things were better settled.

Sir Dav. Ah, Sir Jolly! whatever you think fit; anything of mine that you have a mind to; pray take her, pray take her, you shall be very welcome. Hear you, my dearest, there is but one way for us to get rid of this untoward business, and Sir Jolly has found it out; therefore by all means go along with him, and be ruled by him; and whatever Sir Jolly would have thee do, e'en do it: so Heaven prosper ye, good-bye, good-bye, till I see you again. [*Exit.*

Sir Jol. This is certainly the civilest cuckold in city, town, or country.

Beau. Is he gone? [*Steps out.*

L. Dunce. Yes, and has left poor me here.

Beau. In troth, madam, 'tis barbarously done of him, to commit a horrid murder on the body of an innocent poor fellow, and then leave you to stem the danger of it.

Sir Jol. Odd, an I were as thee, sweetheart, I'd be revenged on him for it, so I would. Go, get ye together, steal out of the house as softly as you can, I'll meet ye in the Piazza presently; go, be sure ye steal out of the house, and don't let Sir Davy see you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Entrance Hall in* Sir DAVY DUNCE'S *House.*

Enter Sir JOLLY JUMBLE.

Sir Jol. Bloody-Bones!

Enter BLOODY-BONES.

Bloody-B. I am here, sir.

Sir Jol. Go you and Fourbin to my house presently; bid Monsieur Fourbin remember that all things be ordered according to my directions. Tell my maids, too, I am coming home in a trice; bid 'em get the great chamber, and the banquet I spoke for, ready presently. And, d'ye hear, carry the minstrels with ye too, for I am resolved to rejoice this morning. Let me see—Sir Davy!

Enter Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Sir Dav. Ay, neighbour, 'tis I; is the business done? I cannot be satisfied till I am sure: have you removed the body? is it gone?

Sir Jol. Yes, yes, my servants conveyed it out of the house just now. Well, Sir Davy, a good morning to you: I wish you your health, with all my heart, Sir Davy; the first thing you do, though, I'd have you say your prayers by all means, if you can.

Sir Dav. If I can possibly, I will.

Sir Jol. Well, good-bye. [*Exit.*

Sir Dav. Well, good-bye heartily, good neighbour.—Vermin, Vermin!

Enter VERMIN.

Ver. Did your honour call?

Sir Dav. Go run, run presently over the square, and call the constable presently; tell him here's murder committed, and that I must speak with him instantly. I'll e'en carry him to my neighbour's, that he may find the dead body there, and so let my

neighbour be very fairly hanged in my stead; ha! a very good jest, as I hope to live, ha, ha, ha!—hey, what's that?

Watchmen. [*Within*]. Almost four o'clock, and a dark cloudy morning; good-morrow, my masters all, good-morrow!

Enter Constable *and* Watch.

Const. How's this, a door open! Come in, gentlemen.—Ah, Sir Davy, your honour's humble servant; I and my watch, going my morning-rounds, and finding your door open, made bold to enter, to see there were no danger. Your worship will excuse our care; a good morning to you, sir.

Sir Dav. Oh, Master Constable, I'm glad you're here; I sent my man just now to call you. I have sad news to tell you, Master Constable.

Const. I am sorry for that, sir; sad news!

Sir Dav. Oh, ay, sad news, very sad news truly: here has been murder committed.

Const. Murder! if that's all, we are your humble servants, sir, we'll bid you good-morrow: murder's nothing at this time o' night in Covent-garden.

Sir Dav. Oh, but this is a horrid, bloody murder, done under my nose; I cannot but take notice of it; though I am sorry to tell you the authors of it, very sorry truly.

Const. Was it committed here near hand?

Sir Dav. Oh, at the very next door; a sad murder indeed. After they had done, they carried the body privately into my neighbour Sir Jolly's house here; I am sorry to tell it you, Master Constable, for I am afraid it will look but scurvily on his side; though I am a justice o' peace, gentlemen, and am bound by my oath to take notice of it; I can't help it.

1st Watch. I never liked that Sir Jolly.

Const. He threatened me t'other day for carrying

a little, dirty, draggle-tailed whore to Bridewell, and said she was his cousin. Sir, if your worship thinks fit, we'll go search his house.

Sir Dav. Oh, by all means, gentlemen, it must be so; justice must have its course; the king's liege subjects must not be destroyed.—Vermin, carry Master Constable and his dragons into the cellar, and make 'em drink; I'll but step into my study, put on my face of authority, and call upon ye instantly.

Watchmen. We thank your honour. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A Room in* Sir JOLLY JUMBLE'S *House. A banquet set out.*

Enter Sir JOLLY JUMBLE, BEAUGARD, *and* Lady DUNCE.

Sir Jol. So, are ye come? I am glad on't; odd, you're welcome, very welcome, odd, ye are; here's a small banquet, but I hope 'twill please you; sit ye down, sit ye down both together; nay, both together: a pox o' him that parts ye, I say!

Beau. Sir Jolly, this might be an entertainment for Antony and Cleopatra, were they living.

Sir Jol. Pish! a pox of Antony and Cleopatra, they are dead and rotten long ago; come, come, time's but short, time's but short, and must be made the best use of; for

Youth's a flower that soon does fade,
And life is but a span;
Man was for the woman made,
And woman made for man.

Why, now we can be bold, and make merry, and frisk and be brisk, rejoice, and make a noise, and—odd, I am pleased, mightily pleased, odd, I am.

L. Dunce. Really, Sir Jolly, you are more a philosopher than I thought you were.

Sir Jol. Philosopher, madam! yes, madam, I have read books in my times; odd, Aristotle, in some things, had very pretty notions, he was an understanding fellow. Why don't ye eat? odd, an ye don't eat—here, child, here's some ringoes,[1] help, help your neighbour a little; odd, they are very good, very comfortable, very cordial.

Beau. Sir Jolly, your health.

Sir Jol. With all my heart, old boy.

L. Dunce. Dear Sir Jolly, what are these? I never tasted of these before.

Sir Jol. That? eat it, eat it, eat it when I bid you; odd, 'tis the root satyrion,[2] a very precious plant, I gather 'em every May myself; odd, they'll make an old fellow of sixty-five cut a caper like a dancing-master. Give me some wine. Madam, here's a health, here's a health, madam, here's a health to honest Sir Davy, faith and troth, ha, ha, ha! [*Dance.*

Enter BLOODY-BONES.

Bloody-B. Sir, sir, sir! what will you do? yonder's the constable and all his watch at the door, and threatens demolishment, if not admitted presently.

Sir Jol. Odds so! odds so! the constable and his watch! what's to be done now? get you both into the alcove there, get ye gone quickly, quickly; no noise, no noise, d'ye hear? [*Exeunt* Lady DUNCE *and* BEAUGARD.] The constable and his watch! a pox on the constable and his watch! what the devil have the constable and his watch to do here?

Enter Constable, Watch, *and* Sir DAVY DUNCE.

Const. This way, this way, gentlemen; stay one or

[1] Eringoes, the holly plant, which was considered to be an aphrodisiac. [2] Another aphrodisiac.

ye at the door, and let nobody pass, do you hear? Sir Jolly, your servant.

Sir Jol. What, this outrage, this disturbance committed upon my house and family! sir, sir, sir! what do you mean by these doings, sweet sir? ho!

Const. Sir, having received information that the body of a murdered man is concealed in your house, I am come, according to my duty, to make search and discover the truth.—Stand to my assistance, gentlemen.

Sir Jol. A murdered man, sir?

Sir Dav. Yes, a murdered man, sir. Sir Jolly, Sir Jolly, I am sorry to see a person of your character and figure in the parish concerned in a murder, I say.

Sir Jol. Here's a dog! here's a rogue for you! here's a villain! here's a cuckoldy son of his mother! I never knew a cuckold in my life that was not a false rogue in his heart; there are no honest fellows living but whore-masters. Hark you, sir, what a pox do you mean? you had best play the fool, and spoil all, you had; what's all this for?

Sir Dav. When your worship's come to be hanged, you'll find the meaning on't, sir. I say once more, search the house.

Const. It shall be done, sir. Come along, friends.

[*Exeunt* Constable *and* Watch.

Sir Jol. Search my house! O Lord! search my house! what will become of me? I shall lose my reputation with man and woman, and nobody will ever trust me again. O Lord! search my house! all will be discovered, do what I can! I'll sing a song like a dying swan, and try to give them warning.

Go from the window, my love, my love, my love,
Go from the window, my dear;
The wind and the rain

Have brought 'em back again,
And thou canst have no lodging here.[1]
O Lord! search my house!

Sir Dav. Break down that door, I'll have that door broke open; break down that door, I say.

[*Knocking within.*

Sir Jol. Very well done; break down my doors, break down my walls, gentlemen! plunder my house! ravish my maids! Ah, cursed be cuckolds, cuckolds, constables, and cuckolds!

A door is opened and discovers BEAUGARD *and* Lady DUNCE.

Re-enter Constable *and* Watch.

Beau. Stand off! by Heaven, the first that comes here comes upon his death.

Sir Dav. Sir, your humble servant; I'm glad to see you are alive again with all my heart. Gentlemen, here's no harm done, gentlemen; here's nobody murdered, gentlemen; the man's alive again, gentlemen; but here's my wife, gentlemen, and a fine gentleman with her, gentlemen; and Master Constable, I hope you'll bear me witness, Master Constable.

Sir Jol. That he's a cuckold, Master Constable.

[*Aside.*

Beau. Hark ye, ye curs, keep off from snapping at my heels, or I shall so feague[2] ye.

Sir Jol. Get ye gone, ye dogs, ye rogues, ye night-toads of the parish dungeon; disturb my house at these unseasonable hours! get ye out of my doors, get ye gone, or I'll brain ye, dogs, rogues, villains!

[*Exeunt* Constable *and* Watch.

Beau. And next for you, Sir Coxcomb, you see I

[1] This ballad often occurs in the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, and particularly in *Monsieur Thomas*.

[2] Whip.

am not murdered, though you paid well for the performance; what think you of bribing my own man to butcher me?

Enter FOURBIN.

Look ye, sir, he can cut a throat upon occasion, and here's another dresses a man's heart with oil and pepper, better than any cook in Christendom.

Four. Will your worship please to have one for your breakfast this morning?

Sir Dav. With all my heart, sweetheart, anything in the world, faith and troth, ha, ha, ha! this is the purest sport, ha, ha, ha!

Re-enter VERMIN.

Ver. Oh, sir, the most unhappy and most unfortunate news! There has been a gentleman in Madam Sylvia's chamber all this night, who, just as you went out of doors, carried her away, and whither they are gone nobody knows.

Sir Dav. With all my heart, I am glad on't, child, I would not care if he had carried away my house and all, man. Unhappy news, quoth-a! poor fool, he does not know I am a cuckold, and that anybody may make bold with what belongs to me, ha, ha, ha! I am so pleased, ha, ha, ha; I think I was never so pleased in all my life before, ha, ha, ha!

Beau. Nay, sir, I have a hank[1] upon you; there are laws for cut-throats, sir; and as you tender your future credit, take this wronged lady home, and use her handsomely, use her like my mistress, sir, do you mark me? that when we think fit to meet again, I hear no complaint of you; this must be done, friend.

Sir Jol. In troth, and it is but reasonable, very reasonable in troth.

L. Dunce. Can you, my dear, forgive me one misfortune?

[1] Hold.

Sir Dav. Madam, in one word, I am thy ladyship's most humble servant and cuckold, Sir Davy Dunce, knight, living in Covent-garden; ha, ha, ha! well, this is mighty pretty, ha, ha, ha!

Enter SYLVIA, *followed by* COURTINE.

Sylv. Sir Jolly, ah, Sir Jolly, protect me or I'm ruined.

Sir Jol. My little minikin, is it thy squeak?

Beau. My dear Courtine, welcome.

Sir Jol. Well, child, and what would that wicked fellow do to thee, child? Ha! child, child, what would he do to thee?

Sylv. Oh, sir, he has most inhumanly seduced me out of my uncle's house, and threatens to marry me.

Cour. Nay, sir, and she having no more grace before her eyes neither, has e'en taken me at my word.

Sir Jol. In troth, and that's very uncivilly done: I don't like these marriages, I'll have no marriages in my house, and there's an end on't.

Sir Dav. And do you intend to marry my niece, friend?

Cour. Yes, sir, and never ask your consent neither.

Sir Dav. In troth, and that's very well said: I am glad on't with all my heart, man, because she has five thousand pounds to her portion, and my estate's bound to pay it. Well, this is the happiest day, ha, ha, ha!

Here, take thy bride, like man and wife agree,
And may she prove as true—as mine to me.

Ha, ha, ha!

Beau. Courtine, I wish thee joy: thou art come opportunely to be a witness of a perfect reconcilement between me and that worthy knight, Sir Davy Dunce; which to preserve inviolate, you must, sir, before we

part, enter into such covenants for performance as I shall think fit.

Sir Dav. No more to be said; it shall be done, sweetheart: but don't be too hard upon me; use me gently, as thou didst my wife; gently, ha, ha, ha! a very good jest, i' faith, ha, ha, ha! or if he should be cruel to me, gentlemen, and take this advantage over a poor cornuto, to lay me in a prison, or throw me in a dungeon, at least—

I hope amongst all you, sirs, I shan't fail
To find one brother-cuckold out for bail.

[*Exeunt.*

WITH the discharge of passions much oppressed,
Disturbed in brain, and pensive in his breast,
Full of those thoughts which make the unhappy sad,
And by imagination half grown mad,
The poet led abroad his mourning muse,
And let her range, to see what sport she'd choose.
Straight, like a bird got loose, and on the wing,
Pleased with her freedom she began to sing;
Each note was echoed all the vale along,
And this was what she uttered in her song:—
Wretch, write no more for an uncertain fame,
Nor call thy muse, when thou art dull, to blame:
Consider with thyself how thou'rt unfit
To make that monster of mankind, a wit:
A wit's a toad, who, swelled with silly pride,
Full of himself, scorns all the world beside;
Civil would seem, though he good manners lacks,
Smiles on all faces, rails behind all backs.

If e'er good-natured, nought to ridicule,
Good-nature melts a wit into a fool:
Placed high like some jack-pudding in a hall,
At Christmas revels, he makes sport for all.
So much in little praises he delights,
But when he's angry, draws his pen, and writes.
A wit to no man will his dues allow;
Wits will not part with a good word that's due:
So whoe'er ventures on the ragged coast
Of starving poets, certainly is lost;
They rail like porters at the penny-post.
At a new author's play see one but sit,
Making his snarling froward face of wit,
The merit he allows, and praise he grants,
Comes like a tax from a poor wretch that wants.
O poets, have a care of one another,
There's hardly one amongst ye true to t'other:
Like Trinculos and Stephanos, ye play
The lewdest tricks each other to betray.[1]
Like foes detract, yet flattering, friend-like smile,
And all is one another to beguile
Of praise, the monster of your barren isle.
Enjoy the prostitute ye so admire,
Enjoy her to the full of your desire;
Whilst this poor scribbler wishes to retire,
Where he may ne'er repeat his follies more,
But curse the fate that wrecked him on your shore.

Now you, who this day as his judges sit,
After you've heard what he has said of wit,
Ought for your own sakes not to be severe,
But show so much to think he meant none here.

[1] In the alteration of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, by Dryden and Davenant.

VENICE PRESERVED;

OR,

A PLOT DISCOVERED.

ENICE PRESERVED was written and acted in 1682, when the terrors of the alleged Popish Plot had nearly subsided, and probably receives its second title from that atrocious and equivocal scare. It is founded on the historical novel of Saint-Réal, *Conjuration des Espagnols contre la Venise en* 1618, though Sir Henry Wotton, who was our ambassador to Venice at the time, calls it a French conspiracy. The whole thing was kept as dark as possible by the Republic, and its exact character is not easy to determine. Mr. Horatio Brown, however, by original researches in the Venetian archives, has thrown much light upon it in his recent charming volume of *Venetian Sketches*. Needy French adventurers, like Pierre and Renault, appear to have inflamed the ambition of Spanish grandees, like Osorio, Viceroy of Naples, and Bedamar, the ambassador at Venice, to compass the ruin of the Republic by taking advantage of gross internal corruption, the glaring contrast between social luxury and poverty, and consequent political discontent. But it was a rat-like hole-and-corner plot, as devoid of civic virtue or dignity, as any Rye House plot of Otway's time, or any American-Irish assassination club of our own.

The last time the play was performed without the omission of the comic scenes, in which Antonio so degradingly figures, was at the special command of George II.; but they were condemned by the audience in spite of royal influence. The satire upon Shaftesbury, designed in the character of Antonio, is said to have been

introduced at the instigation of Charles II. (Derrick, *Dramatic Censor*, p. 2). In the prologue to the play, Shaftesbury's ambition to be elected King of Poland, which procured for him the nick-name of "Count Tapsky," and was ridiculed by Dryden in *The Medal*, is openly referred to. Antonio's name and age also correspond to those of Shaftesbury. But the parody of his style of speaking is poor. The audience on the occasion just referred to bestowed vehement applause on Leigh and Mrs. Currer, who acted the parts of Antonio and Aquilina. So fond were people of buffoonery in those days that, according to Davies (*Dramatic Miscellany*), when Pierre, defying the conspirators (Act III.), exclaims —"Thou die! Thou kill my friend! or thou, or thou, or thou with that lean, withered, wretched face!"—an actor, selected for the purpose, of a most unfortunate figure and meagre visage, presented himself, and converted this fine passage into burlesque.

The play of *Venice Preserved* has been several times translated into French. Hallam observes that the *Manlius Capitolinus* of Antoine de la Fosse, published in 1698, and imitated from *Venice Preserved*, shows the influence which Otway exercised abroad. Upon himself the influence of contemporary French dramatists was in turn very marked. Lord Byron was certainly indebted to this play in his *Marino Faliero*. An old French critic finds fault with the tolling of the bell in Act V. "This shocking extravagance, which in Paris would excite only contempt and derision, strikes the English with awe." How fashions change! Think of Victor Hugo and *Lucrezia Borgia!*

Hallam remarked that *Venice Preserved* had been more frequently seen on the stage than any other play, except those of Shakespeare. He relates that when he saw it he was affected almost to agony. According to Mr. Archer (*Reign of Victoria. Drama*), *Venice Preserved* was performed under Macready at Covent Garden between 1837 and 1839. It was revived at Sadler's Wells in 1845, with Phelps as Jaffier, and Mrs. Warner as Belvidera.

To Her Grace THE DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH.[1]

Madam,

WERE it possible for me to let the world know how entirely your Grace's goodness has devoted a poor man to your service; were there words enough in speech to express the mighty sense I have of your great bounty towards me, surely I should write and talk of it for ever: but your Grace has given me so large a theme, and laid so very vast a foundation, that imagination wants stock to build upon it. I am as one dumb

[1] Louise de Kerouaille, Charles II.'s well-known mistress, who was sent over by Louis XIV., and who supplanted all Charles's other mistresses, except Nell Gwyn. Wealth and honours were heaped upon her, and her apartments at Whitehall were far more splendid, Evelyn tells us, than the queen's. She had, of course, many enemies, one of whom, in the same year in which Otway wrote this dedication, placed the following lines beneath her portrait:—

"Lowly born and meanly bred,
Yet of this nation is the head;
For half Whitehall make her their court,
Though the other half make her their sport.
Monmouth's tower, Jeffery's advance,
Foe to England, spy to France,
False and foolish, proud and bold,
Ugly, as you see, and old;
In a word, her mighty Grace
Is whore in all things but her face."

She was, however, at this time not more than thirty-seven, and survived the king for fifty years.

when I would speak of it; and when I strive to write, I want a scale of thought sufficient to comprehend the height of it.

Forgive me, then, madam, if (as a poor peasant once made a present of an apple to an emperor) I bring this small tribute, the humble growth of my little garden, and lay it at your feet. Believe it is paid you with the utmost gratitude; believe that so long as I have thought to remember how very much I owe your generous nature, I will ever have a heart that shall be grateful for it too: your Grace, next Heaven, deserves it amply from me; that gave me life, but on a hard condition—till your extended favour taught me to prize the gift, and took the heavy burthen it was clogged with from me; I mean hard fortune. When I had enemies, that with malicious power kept back and shaded me from those royal beams whose warmth is all I have, or hope to live by, your noble pity and compassion found me, where I was far cast backward from my blessing, down in the rear of fortune; called me up, placed me in the shine, and I have felt its comfort. You have in that restored me to my native right; for a steady faith, and loyalty to my prince, was all the inheritance my father left me: and however hardly my ill fortune deal with me, 'tis what I prize so well that I ne'er pawned it yet, and hope I ne'er shall part with it.

Nature and fortune were certainly in league when you were born; and as the first took care to give you beauty enough to enslave the hearts of all the world, so the other resolved, to do its merit justice, that none but a monarch, fit to rule that world, should e'er possess it; and in it he had an empire. The young prince[1] you have given him, by his blooming virtues, early declares the mighty stock he came from; and as you have taken all the pious care of a dear mother and a prudent guardian to give him a noble and generous education, may it succeed according to his merits and your wishes: may he grow up to be a bulwark to his illustrious father, and a patron to his loyal subjects; with wisdom and learning to assist him, whenever called to his councils;

[1] Charles Lennox, created Duke of Richmond in 1675, and an ancestor of the present Duke.

to defend his right against the encroachments of republicans in his senates; to cherish such men as shall be able to vindicate the royal cause; that good and fit servants to the crown may never be lost for want of a protector. May he have courage and conduct, fit to fight his battles abroad, and terrify his rebels at home; and that all these may be yet more sure, may he never, during the spring-time of his years, when those growing virtues ought with care to be cherished, in order to their ripening;—may he never meet with vicious natures, or the tongues of faithless, sordid, insipid flatterers, to blast them. To conclude, may he be as great as the hand of fortune (with his honour) shall be able to make him; and may your Grace, who are so good a mistress, and so noble a patroness, never meet with a less grateful servant than,

Madam,

Your Grace's entirely
devoted Creature,
THOMAS OTWAY.

PROLOGUE.

In these distracted times, when each man dreads
The bloody stratagems of busy heads;
When we have feared, three years, we know not what,
Till witnesses[1] begin to die o' the rot,
What made our poet meddle with a plot?
Was't that he fancied, for the very sake
And name of plot, his trifling play might take?
For there's not in't one inch-board evidence,
But 'tis, he says, to reason plain, and sense,
And that he thinks a plausible defence.
Were truth by sense and reason to be tried,
Sure all our swearers might be laid aside:
No, of such tools our author has no need,
To make his plot, or make his play succeed;
He of black bills has no prodigious tales,
Or Spanish pilgrims cast ashore in Wales;
Here's not one murdered magistrate at least,
Kept rank, like venison for a city feast;
Grown four days stiff, the better to prepare
And fit his pliant limbs to ride in chair:
Yet here's an army raised, though under ground,
But no man seen, nor one commission found;
Here is a traitor too that's very old,
Turbulent, subtle, mischievous, and bold;
Bloody, revengeful, and, to crown his part,
Loves fumbling with a wench with all his heart;
Till after having many changes past,
In spite of age (thanks Heaven) is hanged at last.
Next is a senator that keeps a whore,
In Venice none a higher office bore;
To lewdness every night the lecher ran:
Show me, all London, such another man,
Match him at Mother Creswold's[2] if you can.
O Poland, Poland! had it been thy lot,
T'have heard in time of this Venetian plot,
Thou surely chosen hadst one king from thence,
And honoured them, as thou hast England since.

[1] *i.e.* Titus Oates and others. The prologue is full of allusions to events of the time.

[2] The well-known Mother Creswell, a notorious procuress, who kept up an extensive correspondence with spies and emissaries, by whom she was informed of "the rising beauties in different parts of the kingdom."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Duke of VENICE.
PRIULI, Father of Belvidera, a Senator.
ANTONIO, a fine speaker in the Senate.
BEDAMAR, the Spanish Ambassador.

JAFFIER,
PIERRE,
RENAULT,
SPINOSA,
THEODORE,
ELIOT,
REVILLIDO,
DURAND,
MEZZANA,
BRAINVILLE,
TERNON,
RETROSI,
BRABE,
} Conspirators.

BELVIDERA.
AQUILINA, a Greek Courtesan.
Two Women, Attendants on Belvidera.
Two Women, Servants to Aquilina.
The Council of Ten.
Officer, Guard, Friar, Executioner, and **Rabble.**

SCENE—VENICE.

VENICE PRESERVED;

OR,

A PLOT DISCOVERED.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.—*A Public Place.*

Enter PRIULI *and* JAFFIER.

PRIU. No more! I'll hear no more; begone and leave me.

Jaff. Not hear me! by my suffering but you shall!
My lord, my lord! I'm not that abject wretch
You think me: patience! where's the distance throws
Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, though proud oppression will not hear me?

Priu. Have you not wronged me?

Jaff. Could my nature e'er
Have brooked injustice, or the doing wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent myself,
To gain a hearing from a cruel father!
Wronged you?

Priu. Yes, wronged me: in the nicest point,
The honour of my house, you've done me wrong.
You may remember,—for I now will speak,
And urge its baseness,—when you first came home
From travel, with such hopes as made you looked on
By all men's eyes, a youth of expectation,
Pleased with your growing virtue, I received you,
Courted, and sought to raise you to your merits:
My house, my table, nay, my fortune too,
My very self was yours; you might have used me
To your best service; like an open friend,
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine;
When, in requital of my best endeavours,
You treacherously practised to undo me;
Seduced the weakness of my age's darling,
My only child, and stole her from my bosom—
O Belvidera!

Jaff. 'Tis to me you owe her;
Childless you had been else, and in the grave
Your name extinct, no more Priuli heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past
Since in your brigantine you sailed to see
The Adriatic wedded by our Duke,[1]
And I was with you: your unskilful pilot
Dashed us upon a rock, when to your boat
You made for safety; entered first yourself:
The affrighted Belvidera, following next,
As she stood trembling on the vessel's side,
Was by a wave washed off into the deep;
When instantly I plunged into the sea,

[1] This ceremony (first instituted by Pope Alexander III.) took place every Ascension-day. The Doge of Venice, attended by his nobles and the senate, went in a vessel called the Bucentaur to the Adriatic sea, which he *married* by casting a gold ring into it, using at the same time these words: "We wed thee, O Sea, in token of a true and lasting dominion," &c. This circumstance is frequently alluded to in the course of the play.—*Thornton.*

And, buffeting the billows to her rescue,
Redeemed her life with half the loss of mine.
Like a rich conquest, in one hand I bore her,
And with the other dashed the saucy waves,
That thronged and pressed to rob me of my prize:
I brought her, gave her to your despairing arms.
Indeed you thanked me; but a nobler gratitude
Rose in her soul; for from that hour she loved me,
Till for her life she paid me with herself.

Priu. You stole her from me; like a thief you stole her
At dead of night, that cursèd hour you chose
To rifle me of all my heart held dear.
May all your joys in her prove false like mine!
A sterile fortune, and a barren bed,
Attend you both! continual discord make
Your days and nights bitter and grievous! still
May the hard hand of a vexatious need
Oppress and grind you, till at last you find
The curse of disobedience all your portion!

Jaff. Half of your curse you have bestowed in vain;
Heaven has already crowned our faithful loves
With a young boy, sweet as his mother's beauty:
May he live to prove more gentle than his grandsire,
And happier than his father!

Priu. Rather live
To bait thee for his bread, and din your ears
With hungry cries; whilst his unhappy mother
Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jaff. You talk as if 'twould please you.

Priu. 'Twould, by Heaven!
Once she was dear indeed; the drops that fell
From my sad heart when she forgot her duty,
The fountain of my life, were not so precious!
But she is gone, and if I am a man
I will forget her.

Jaff. Would I were in my grave!

Priu. And she too with thee;

For, living here, you're but my curst remembrancers
I once was happy.

Jaff. You use me thus, because you know my soul
Is fond of Belvidera: you perceive
My life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me.
Oh! could my soul ever have known satiety,
Were I that thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me,
But I might send her back to you with contumely,
And court my fortune where she would be kinder?

Priu. You dare not do't.

Jaff. Indeed, my lord, I dare not.
My heart, that awes me, is too much my master:
Three years are past since first our vows were plighted,
During which time, the world must bear me witness,
I've treated Belvidera like your daughter,
The daughter of a senator of Venice:
Distinction, place, attendance, and observance,
Due to her birth, she always has commanded;
Out of my little fortune I have done this,
Because (though hopeless e'er to win your nature)
The world might see I loved her for herself,
Not as the heiress of the great Priuli—

Priu. No more!

Jaff. Yes, all! and then adieu for ever.
There's not a wretch that lives on common charity
But's happier than me: for I have known
The luscious sweets of plenty; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never waked but to a joyful morning;
Yet now must fall, like a full ear of corn,
Whose blossom 'scaped, yet's withered in the ripening.

Priu. Home, and be humble, study to retrench;
Discharge the lazy vermin of thy hall,
Those pageants of thy folly;
Reduce the glittering trappings of thy wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state;

Then to some suburb-cottage both retire;
Drudge, to feed loathsome life; get brats, and starve.
Home, home, I say. [*Exit.*

Jaff. Yes, if my heart would let me—
This proud, this swelling heart: home I would go,
But that my doors are hateful to mine eyes,
Filled and dammed up with gaping creditors,
Watchful as fowlers when their game will spring;
I have now not fifty ducats in the world,
Yet still I am in love, and pleased with ruin.
O, Belvidera! oh! she is my wife—
And we will bear our wayward fate together,
But ne'er know comfort more.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. My friend, good-morrow!
How fares the honest partner of my heart?
What, melancholy! not a word to spare me?

Jaff. I'm thinking, Pierre, how that damned starving quality
Called honesty got footing in the world.

Pier. Why, powerful villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety: honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten. Were all mankind villains,
They'd starve each other; lawyers would want practice,
Cut-throats rewards; each man would kill his brother
Himself, none would be paid or hanged for murder.
Honesty was a cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold deserving rogues,
That fools and cowards might sit safe in power,
And lord it uncontrolled above their betters.

Jaff. Then honesty's but a notion?

Pier. Nothing else:
Like wit, much talked of, not to be defined,

He that pretends to most, too, has least share in't;
'Tis a ragged virtue: honesty! no more on't.
Jaff. Sure thou art honest?
Pier. So indeed men think me;
But they're mistaken, Jaffier: I am a rogue
As well as they;
A fine, gay, bold-faced villain, as thou seest me:
'Tis true, I pay my debts when they're contracted;
I steal from no man; would not cut a throat
To gain admission to a great man's purse,
Or a whore's bed; I'd not betray my friend,
To get his place or fortune: I scorn to flatter
A blown-up fool above, or crush the wretch
Beneath me.—
Yet, Jaffier, for all this, I am a villain.
Jaff. A villain!
Pier. Yes, a most notorious villain:
To see the sufferings of my fellow-creatures,
And own myself a man; to see our senators
Cheat the deluded people with a show
Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.
They say, by them our hands are free from fetters,
Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;
Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow;
Drive us like wrecks down the rough tide of power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from destruction:
All that bear this are villains, and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,
And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,
That make us slaves, and tell us 'tis our charter.
Jaff. O Aquilina! friend, to lose such beauty,
The dearest purchase of thy noble labours!
She was thy right by conquest, as by love.
Pier. O Jaffier! I'd so fixed my heart upon her,
That wheresoe'er I framed a scheme of life
For time to come, she was my only joy,
With which I wished to sweeten future cares;

I fancied pleasures, none but one that loves
And dotes as I did can imagine like them :
When in the extremity of all these hopes,
In the most charming hour of expectation,
Then when our eager wishes soar the highest,
Ready to stoop and grasp the lovely game,
A haggard owl, a worthless kite of prey,
With his foul wings sailed in, and spoiled my quarry.

Jaff. I know the wretch, and scorn him as thou hat'st him.

Pier. Curse on the common good that's so protected,
Where every slave that heaps up wealth enough
To do much wrong becomes a lord of right !
I, who believed no ill could e'er come near me,
Found in the embraces of my Aquilina
A wretched, old, but itching senator ;
A wealthy fool, that had bought out my title ;
A rogue, that uses beauty like a lamb-skin,
Barely to keep him warm : that filthy cuckoo, too,
Was in my absence crept into my nest,
And spoiling all my brood of noble pleasure.

Jaff. Didst thou not chase him thence ?

Pier. I did ; and drove
The rank, old, bearded Hirco stinking home :
The matter was complained of in the senate,
I summoned to appear, and censured basely,
For violating something they call privilege.
This was the recompense of all my service ;
Would I'd been rather beaten by a coward !
A soldier's mistress, Jaffier, 's his religion ;
When that's profaned, all other ties are broken ;
That even dissolves all former bonds of service,
And from that hour I think myself as free
To be the foe as e'er the friend of Venice—
Nay, dear Revenge ! whene'er thou call'st I'm ready.

Jaff. I think no safety can be here for virtue,

And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live
In such a wretched state as this of Venice,
Where all agree to spoil the public good,
And villains fatten with the brave man's labours.
Pier. We've neither safety, unity, nor peace,
For the foundation's lost of common good;
Justice is lame as well as blind amongst us;
The laws (corrupted to their ends that make them)
Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny,
That every day starts up to enslave us deeper:
Now could this glorious cause but find out friends
To do it right—O Jaffier! then mightst thou
Not wear these seals of woe upon thy face:
The proud Priuli should be taught humanity,
And learn to value such a son as thou art.
I dare not speak; but my heart bleeds this moment!
Jaff. Curst be the cause, though I thy friend be part on't!
Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
For I am used to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten it to thy spirit.
Pier. Too soon it will reach thy knowledge—
Jaff. Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's virtue in thy friendship
Would make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my constancy, and welcome ruin.
Pier. Then thou art ruined!
Jaff. That I long since knew;
I and ill fortune have been long acquainted.
Pier. I passed this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a troop of villains;
The sons of public rapine were destroying:
They told me, by the sentence of the law
They had commission to seize all thy fortune:
Nay, more; Priuli's cruel hand hath signed it.
Here stood a ruffian, with a horrid face,
Lording it o'er a pile of massy plate,

Tumbled into a heap for public sale:
There was another making villanous jests
At thy undoing; he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient most domestic ornaments,
Rich hangings, intermixed and wrought with gold;
The very bed which on thy wedding-night
Received thee to the arms of Belvidera,
The scene of all thy joys, was violated
By the coarse hands of filthy dungeon-villains,
And thrown amongst the common lumber.

Jaff. Now, thank Heaven—

Pier. Thank Heaven! for what?

Jaff. That I'm not worth a ducat.

Pier. Curse thy dull stars, and the worse fate of Venice,
Where brothers, friends, and fathers, all are false;
Where there's no trust, no truth; where innocence
Stoops under vile oppression, and vice lords it.
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy beauteous Belvidera, like a wretch
That's doomed to banishment, came weeping forth,
Shining through tears, like April-suns in showers,
That labour to o'ercome the cloud that loads 'em,
Whilst two young virgins, on whose arms she leaned,
Kindly looked up, and at her grief grew sad,
As if they catched the sorrows that fell from her!
Even the lewd rabble that were gathered round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her;
Governed their roaring throats, and grumbled pity:
I could have hugged the greasy rogues; they pleased me.

Jaff. I thank thee for this story, from my soul,
Since now I know the worst that can befall me.
Ah, Pierre! I have a heart that could have borne
The roughest wrong my fortune could have done me;
But when I think what Belvidera feels,
The bitterness her tender spirit tastes of,

I own myself a coward: bear my weakness,
If, throwing thus my arms about thy neck,
I play the boy, and blubber in thy bosom.
Oh, I shall drown thee with my sorrows!
Pier. Burn!
First burn, and level Venice to thy ruin.
What, starve like beggars' brats in frosty weather,
Under a hedge, and whine ourselves to death!
Thou, or thy cause, shall never want assistance,
Whilst I have blood or fortune fit to serve thee.
Command my heart: thou 'rt every way its master.
Jaff. No; there's a secret pride in bravely dying.
Pier. Rats die in holes and corners, dogs run mad;
Man knows a braver remedy for sorrow:
Revenge! the attribute of gods; they stamped it
With their great image on our natures. Die!
Consider well the cause that calls upon thee,
And, if thou'rt base enough, die then. Remember
Thy Belvidera suffers; Belvidera!
Die!—damn first!—what! be decently interred
In a church-yard, and mingle thy brave dust
With stinking rogues that rot in dirty winding-sheets,
Surfeit-slain fools, the common dung of the soil?
Jaff. Oh!
Pier. Well said, out with it, swear a little—
Jaff. Swear!
By sea and air, by earth, by Heaven and hell,
I will revenge my Belvidera's tears!
Hark thee, my friend: Priuli—is—a senator!
Pier. A dog!
Jaff. Agreed.
Pier. Shoot him.
Jaff. With all my heart.
No more. Where shall we meet at night?
Pier. I'll tell thee;
On the Rialto every night at twelve

I take my evening's walk of meditation:
There we will meet, and talk of precious mischief.
Jaff. Farewell.
Pier. At twelve.
Jaff. At any hour: my plagues
Will keep me waking.— [*Exit* PIERRE.
Tell me why, good Heaven,
Thou madest me what I am, with all the spirit,
Aspiring thoughts, and elegant desires,
That fill the happiest man? Ah! rather why
Didst thou not form me sordid as my fate,
Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry burdens?
Why have I sense to know the curse that's on me?
Is this just dealing, Nature?—Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA, *attended.*

Poor Belvidera!
Belv. Lead me, lead me, my virgins,
To that kind voice. My lord, my love, my refuge!
Happy my eyes, when they behold thy face:
My heavy heart will leave its doleful beating
At sight of thee, and bound with sprightful joys.
Oh, smile, as when our loves were in their spring,
And cheer my fainting soul.
Jaff. As when our loves
Were in their spring? has then my fortune changed?
Art thou not Belvidera, still the same,
Kind, good, and tender, as my arms first found thee?
If thou art altered, where shall I have harbour?
Where ease my loaded heart? oh! where complain?
Belv. Does this appear like change, or love decaying?
When thus I throw myself into thy bosom, [ing
With all the resolution of strong truth?
Beats not my heart, as 'twould alarum thine
To a new charge of bliss? I joy more in thee
Than did thy mother when she hugged thee first,
And blessed the gods for all her travail past.

Jaff. Can there in woman be such glorious faith?
Sure all ill stories of thy sex are false.
O woman! lovely woman! Nature made thee
To temper man: we had been brutes without you;
Angels are painted fair, to look like you:
There's in you all that we believe of Heaven,
Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,
Eternal joy, and everlasting love.

Belv. If love be treasure, we'll be wondrous rich:
I have so much, my heart will surely break with't;
Vows can't express it: when I would declare
How great's my joy, I'm dumb with the big thought;
I swell, and sigh, and labour with my longing.
Oh, lead me to some desert wide and wild,
Barren as our misfortunes, where my soul
May have its vent; where I may tell aloud
To the high Heavens, and every listening planet,
With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught;
Where I may throw my eager arms about thee,
Give loose to love, with kisses kindling joy,
And let off all the fire that's in my heart!

Jaff. O Belvidera! doubly I'm a beggar,—
Undone by fortune, and in debt to thee;
Want! worldly want! that hungry meagre fiend
Is at my heels, and chases me in view.
Canst thou bear cold and hunger? Can these limbs,
Framed for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of smarting poverty?
When banished by our miseries abroad,
(As suddenly we shall be) to seek out,
In some far climate where our names are strangers,
For charitable succour; wilt thou then,
When in a bed of straw we shrink together,
And the bleak winds shall whistle round our heads;
Wilt thou then talk thus to me? Wilt thou then
Hush my cares thus, and shelter me with love?

Belv. Oh, I will love thee, even in madness love thee:
Though my distracted senses should forsake me,
I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart
Should 'suage itself, and be let loose to thine.
Though the bare earth be all our resting-place,
Its roots our food, some clift our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thy head;
And as thou sighing liest, and swelled with sorrow,
Creep to thy bosom, pour the balm of love
Into thy soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the morning.

Jaff. Hear this, you Heavens, and wonder how you made her!
Reign, reign, ye monarchs that divide the world;
Busy rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquillity and happiness like mine:
Like gaudy ships, the obsequious billows fall
And rise again, to lift you in your pride;
They wait but for a storm, and then devour you:
I, in my private bark, already wrecked,
Like a poor merchant driven on unknown land,
That had by chance packed up his choicest treasure
In one dear casket, and saved only that,
Since I must wander further on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store;
Resolved to scorn, and trust my fate no more.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE I.—*Before the House of* AQUILINA.

Enter PIERRE *and* AQUILINA.

AQUIL. By all thy wrongs, thou'rt dearer to my arms
Than all the wealth of Venice: pr'ythee stay,
And let us love to-night.
Pier. No: there's fool,
There's fool about thee: when a woman sells
Her flesh to fools, her beauty's lost to me;
They leave a taint, a sully where they've passed;
There's such a baneful quality about them,
Even spoils complexions with their nauseousness;
They infect all they touch; I cannot think
Of tasting any thing a fool has palled.
Aquil. I loathe and scorn that fool thou mean'st, as much
Or more than thou canst; but the beast has gold,
That makes him necessary; power too,
To qualify my character, and poise me
Equal with peevish virtue, that beholds
My liberty with envy: in their hearts
They're loose as I am; but an ugly power
Sits in their faces, and frights pleasures from them.

Pier. Much good may't do you, madam, with your senator!

Aquil. My senator! why, canst thou think that wretch
E'er filled thy Aquilina's arms with pleasure?
Think'st thou, because I sometimes give him leave
To foil himself at what he is unfit for;
Because I force myself to endure and suffer him,
Think'st thou I love him? No, by all the joys
Thou ever gav'st me, his presence is my penance:
The worst thing an old man can be is a lover,
A mere *memento mori* to poor woman.
I never lay by his decrepit side,
But all that night I pondered on my grave.

Pier. Would he were well sent thither!

Aquil. That's my wish too,
For then, my Pierre, I might have cause, with pleasure,
To play the hypocrite. Oh! how I could weep
Over the dying dotard, and kiss him too,
In hopes to smother him quite; then, when the time
Was come to pay my sorrows at his funeral,
(For he has already made me heir to treasures
Would make me out-act a real widow's whining,)
How could I frame my face to fit my mourning!
With wringing hands attend him to his grave;
Fall swooning on his hearse; take mad possession
Even of the dismal vault where he lay buried;
There, like the Ephesian matron[1] dwell, till thou,
My lovely soldier, com'st to my deliverance:
Then throwing up my veil, with open arms
And laughing eyes, run to new dawning joy.

Pier. No more! I've friends to meet me here to-night,
And must be private. As you prize my friendship,

[1] A reference to the story in Petronius on which Chapman founded his *Widow's Tears*.

Keep up[1] your coxcomb: let him not pry nor listen,
Nor frisk about the house as I have seen him,
Like a tame mumping squirrel with a bell on;
Curs will be abroad to bite him, if you do.

Aquil. What friends to meet? mayn't I be of your council?

Pier. How! a woman ask questions out of bed?
Go to your senator, ask him what passes
Amongst his brethren; he'll hide nothing from you:
But pump not me for politics. No more!
Give order, that whoever in my name
Comes here, receive admittance: so good-night.

Aquil. Must we ne'er meet again? embrace no more?
Is love so soon and utterly forgotten?

Pier. As you henceforward treat your fool, I'll think on't. [*Exit.*

Aquil. Cursed be all fools, and doubly cursed myself,
The worst of fools! I die if he forsakes me;
And how to keep him, Heaven or hell instruct me.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Rialto.*

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. I'm here; and thus, the shades of night around me,
I look as if all hell were in my heart,
And I in hell. Nay, surely, 'tis so with me;
For every step I tread, methinks some fiend
Knocks at my breast, and bids it not be quiet.
I've heard how desperate wretches, like myself,
Have wandered out at this dead time of night
To meet the foe of mankind in his walk:
Sure I'm so cursed that, though of Heaven forsaken,

[1] *i.e.* Shut up.

No minister of darkness cares to tempt me.
Hell! hell! why sleep'st thou?

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Sure I've stayed too long:
The clock has struck, and I may lose my proselyte.
Speak, who goes there?

Jaff. A dog, that comes to howl
At yonder moon: what's he that asks the question?

Pier. A friend to dogs, for they are honest creatures,
And ne'er betray their masters; never fawn
On any that they love not. Well met, friend:
Jaffier?

Jaff. The same. O Pierre! thou'rt come in season;
I was just going to pray.

Pier. Ah, that's mechanic;
Priests make a trade on't, and yet starve by't too:
No praying; it spoils business, and time's precious.
Where's Belvidera?

Jaff. For a day or two
I've lodged her privately, till I see farther
What fortune will do with me. Pr'ythee, friend,
If thou wouldst have me fit to hear good counsel,
Speak not of Belvidera—

Pier. Speak not of her?

Jaff. Oh, no!

Pier. Nor name her? May be I wish her well.

Jaff. Whom well?

Pier. Thy wife, the lovely Belvidera;
I hope a man may wish his friend's wife well,
And no harm done!

Jaff. You're merry, Pierre!

Pier. I am so:
Thou shalt smile too, and Belvidera smile;
We'll all rejoice. Here's something to buy pins;
[*Gives him a purse.*
Marriage is chargeable.

Jaff. I but half wished
To see the devil, and he's here already.
Well!—
What must this buy, rebellion, murder, treason?
Tell me which way I must be damned for this.
Pier. When last we parted, we'd no qualms like these,
But entertained each other's thoughts like men
Whose souls were well acquainted. Is the world
Reformed since our last meeting? What new miracles
Have happened? Has Priuli's heart relented?
Can he be honest?
Jaff. Kind Heaven! let heavy curses
Gall his old age; cramps, aches,[1] rack his bones;
And bitterest disquiet wring his heart;
Oh, let him live till life become his burden!
Let him groan under it long, linger an age
In the worst agonies and pangs of death,
And find its ease but late!
Pier. Nay, couldst thou not
As well, my friend, have stretched the curse to all
The senate round, as to one single villain?
Jaff. But curses stick not: could I kill with cursing,
By Heaven, I know not thirty heads in Venice
Should not be blasted; senators should rot
Like dogs on dunghills; but their wives and daughters
Die of their own diseases. Oh for a curse
To kill with!
Pier. Daggers—daggers are much better!
Jaff. Ha!
Pier. Daggers.
Jaff. But where are they?
Pier. Oh, a thousand
May be disposed in honest hands in Venice.
Jaff. Thou talk'st in clouds.

[1] A word of two syllables, as in Shakespeare.

Pier. But yet a heart half wronged
As thine has been would find the meaning, Jaffier.
Jaff. A thousand daggers, all in honest hands!
And have not I a friend will-stick one here?
Pier. Yes, if I thought thou wert not to be cherished
To a nobler purpose, I would be that friend.
But thou hast better friends; friends whom thy wrongs
Have made thy friends; friends worthy to be called so.
I'll trust thee with a secret: there are spirits
This hour at work. But as thou art a man
Whom I have picked and chosen from the world,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter;
And when I've told thee that which only gods,
And men like gods, are privy to, then swear
No chance or change shall wrest it from thy bosom.
Jaff. When thou wouldst bind me, is there need of oaths?—
Green-sickness girls lose maidenheads with such counters—
For thou'rt so near my heart that thou mayst see
Its bottom, sound its strength and firmness to thee:
Is coward, fool, or villain, in my face?
If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou wouldst not use me in a little cause,
For I am fit for honour's toughest task,
Nor ever yet found fooling was my province;
And for a villanous inglorious enterprise,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee: set it to what point thou wilt.
Pier. Nay, 'tis a cause thou wilt be fond of, Jaffier:
For it is founded on the noblest basis,—
Our liberties, our natural inheritance;
There's no religion, no hypocrisy in't;
We'll do the business, and ne'er fast and pray for it:
Openly act a deed the world shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

Jaff. For liberty?
Pier. For liberty, my friend!
Thou shalt be freed from base Priuli's tyranny,
And thy sequestered fortunes healed again;
I shall be freed from those opprobrious wrongs
That press me now, and bend my spirit downward;
All Venice free, and every growing merit
Succeed to its just right; fools shall be pulled
From wisdom's seat,—those baleful unclean birds,
Those lazy owls, who, perched near fortune's top,
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledged virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the grove harmonious.
Jaff. What can I do?
Pier. Canst thou not kill a senator?
Jaff. Were there one wise or honest, I could kill him
For herding with that nest of fools and knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if revenge
Were to be had, and the brave story warms me.
Pier. Swear then!
Jaff. I do, by all those glittering stars,
And yon great ruling planet of the night!
By all good powers above, and ill below!
By love and friendship, dearer than my life!
No power or death shall make me false to thee.
Pier. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my heart.
A council's held hard by, where the destruction
Of this great empire's hatching: there I'll lead thee.
But be a man, for thou'rt to mix with men
Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when it's wildest—
Jaff. I give thee thanks
For this kind warning: yes, I will be a man,
And charge thee, Pierre, whene'er thou seest my fears
Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my breast, and show it for a coward's.

Come, let's be gone, for from this hour I chase
All little thoughts, all tender human follies
Out of my bosom: vengeance shall have room—
Revenge!

Pier. And liberty!

Jaff. Revenge! Revenge! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in* AQUILINA'S *House.*

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Why was my choice ambition, the worst ground
A wretch can build on? 'Tis indeed at distance
A goodly prospect, tempting to the view;
The height delights us, and the mountain-top
Looks beautiful, because 'tis nigh to Heaven;
But we ne'er think how sandy's the foundation,
What storm will batter, and what tempest shake us.
Who's there?

Enter SPINOSA.

Spin. Renault, good-morrow! for by this time
I think the scale of night has turned the balance,
And weighs up morning: has the clock struck twelve?

Ren. Yes; clocks will go as they are set; but man,
Irregular man's ne'er constant, never certain.
I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness
In waiting dull attendance; 'tis the curse
Of diligent virtue to be mixed, like mine,
With giddy tempers, souls but half resolved.

Spin. Hell seize that soul amongst us it can frighten!

Ren. What's then the cause that I am here alone?
Why are we not together?

Enter ELIOT.

O sir, welcome!
You are an Englishman: when treason's hatching,
One might have thought you'd not have been behind-hand.
In what whore's lap have you been lolling?
Give but an Englishman his whore and ease,
Beef, and a sea-coal fire, he's yours for ever.

Eliot. Frenchman, you are saucy.

Ren. How!

Enter BEDAMAR the Ambassador, THEODORE, BRAINVILLE, DURAND, BRABE, REVILLIDO, MEZZANA, TERNON, *and* RETROSI, Conspirators.

Bed. At difference? fie!
Is this a time for quarrels? Thieves and rogues
Fall out and brawl: should men of your high calling,
Men separated by the choice of Providence
From the gross heap of mankind, and set here
In this assembly, as in one great jewel,
To adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smiled on;—
Should you, like boys, wrangle for trifles?

Ren. Boys!

Bed. Renault, thy hand!

Ren. I thought I'd given my heart
Long since to every man that mingles here;
But grieve to find it trusted with such tempers
That can't forgive my froward age its weakness.

Bed. Eliot, thou once hadst virtue; I have seen
Thy stubborn temper bend with godlike goodness,
Not half thus courted: 'tis thy nation's glory,
To hug the foe that offers brave alliance.
Once more embrace, my friends—we'll all embrace!
United thus, we are the mighty engine
Must twist this rooted empire from its basis.
Totters it not already?

Eliot. Would 'twere tumbling!

Bed. Nay, it shall down: this night we seal its ruin.

Enter PIERRE.

O Pierre! thou art welcome!
Come to my breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovelily dreadful, and the fate of Venice
Seems on thy sword already. O, my Mars!
The poets that first feigned a god of war,
Sure prophesied of thee.

Pier. Friends! was not Brutus—
I mean that Brutus who in open Senate
Stabbed the first Cæsar that usurped the world—
A gallant man!

Ren. Yes, and Catiline too;
Though story wrong his fame; for he conspired
To prop the reeling glory of his country:
His cause was good.

Bed. And ours as much above it
As, Renault, thou'rt superior to Cethegus,
Or Pierre to Cassius.

Pier. Then to what we aim at,
When do we start? or must we talk for ever?

Bed. No, Pierre, the deed's near birth: fate seems to have set
The business up, and given it to our care:
I hope there's not a heart nor hand amongst us
But is firm and ready.

All. All! We'll die with Bedamar.

Bed. Oh, men!
Matchless, as will your glory be hereafter.
The game is for a matchless prize, if won;
If lost, disgraceful ruin.

Ren. What can lose it?
The public stock's a beggar; one Venetian
Trusts not another. Look into their stores
Of general safety; empty magazines,
A tattered fleet, a murmuring unpaid army,
Bankrupt nobility, a harassed commonalty,
A factious, giddy, and divided Senate,

Is all the strength of Venice. Let's destroy it;
Let's fill their magazines with arms to awe them,
Man out their fleet, and make their trade maintain it;
Let loose the murmuring army on their masters,
To pay themselves with plunder; lop their nobles
To the base roots, whence most of them first sprung;
Enslave the rout, whom smarting will make humble;
Turn out their droning Senate, and possess
That seat of empire which our souls were framed for.

Pier. Ten thousand men are armèd at your nod,
Commanded all by leaders fit to guide
A battle for the freedom of the world;
This wretched state has starved them in its service,
And, by your bounty quickened, they're resolved
To serve your glory, and revenge their own:
They've all their different quarters in this city,
Watch for the alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

Bed. I doubt not, friend, but thy unwearied diligence
Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease:
After this night, it is resolved we meet
No more, till Venice own us for her lords.

Pier. How lovelily the Adriatic whore,
Dressed in her flames, will shine!—devouring flames,
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her foundation!

Bed. Now if any
'Mongst us that owns this glorious cause
Have friends or interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told. The general doom is sealed;
But I'd forego the hopes of a world's empire,
Rather than wound the bowels of my friend.

Pier. I must confess, you there have touched my weakness:
I have a friend; hear it, such a friend!

My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you:
He knows the very business of this hour;
But he rejoices in the cause, and loves it;
We've changed a vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.

Ren. How! all betrayed?

Pier. No! I've dealt nobly with you;
I've brought my all into the public stock;
I'd but one friend, and him I'll share amongst you!
Receive and cherish him: or if, when seen
And searched, you find him worthless, as my tongue
Has lodged this secret in his faithful breast,
To ease your fears I wear a dagger here
Shall rip it out again, and give you rest.—
Come forth, thou only good I e'er could boast of.

Enter JAFFIER *with a dagger.*

Bed. His presence bears the show of manly virtue.

Jaff. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncalled
I dare approach this place of fatal counsels;
But I'm amongst you, and, by Heaven, it glads me
To see so many virtues thus united,
To restore justice, and dethrone oppression.
Command this sword, if you would have it quiet,
Into this breast; but, if you think it worthy
To cut the throats of reverend rogues in robes,
Send me into the cursed assembled Senate;
It shrinks not, though I meet a father there.
Would you behold this city flaming? here's
A hand shall bear a lighted torch at noon
To the arsenal, and set its gates on fire.

Ren. You talk this well, sir.

Jaff. Nay—by Heaven, I'll do this!
Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces;
You fear me a villain, and indeed 'tis odd

To hear a stranger talk thus at first meeting
Of matters that have been so well debated;
But I come ripe with wrongs, as you with counsels;
I hate this Senate, am a foe to Venice;
A friend to none but men resolved, like me,
To push on mischief. Oh, did you but know me,
I need not talk thus!

Bed. Pierre, I must embrace him.
My heart beats to this man as if it knew him.

Ren. I never loved these huggers.

Jaff. Still I see
The cause delights me not. Your friends survey me
As I were dangerous; but I come armed
Against all doubts, and to your trust will give
A pledge, worth more than all the world can pay for.
My Belvidera! Ho! my Belvidera!

Bed. What wonder next?

Jaff. Let me entreat you,
As I have henceforth hopes to call ye friends,
That all but the ambassador, and this
Grave guide of counsels, with my friend that owns me,
Withdraw awhile, to spare a woman's blushes.

[*Exeunt all but* BEDAMAR, RENAULT, JAFFIER, *and* PIERRE.

Bed. Pierre, whither will this ceremony lead us?

Jaff. My Belvidera! Belvidera!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Belv. Who,
Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour?
That voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
And fill my ears with the soft breath of love.
Thou hourly image of my thoughts, where art thou?

Jaff. Indeed 'tis late.

Belv. Oh! I have slept, and dreamt,
And dreamt again. Where hast thou been, thou loiterer?
Though my eyes closed, my arms have still been opened,
Stretched every way betwixt my broken slumbers,
To search if thou wert come to crown my rest;
There's no repose without thee. Oh, the day
Too soon will break, and wake us to our sorrow;
Come, come to bed, and bid thy cares good-night.

Jaff. O Belvidera! we must change the scene
In which the past delights of life were tasted:
The poor sleep little; we must learn to watch
Our labours late, and early every morning,
'Midst winter frosts, thin clad and fed with sparing,
Rise to our toils, and drudge away the day.

Belv. Alas! where am I? whither is't you lead me?
Methinks I read distraction in your face,
Something less gentle than the fate you tell me.
You shake and tremble too; your blood runs cold!
Heavens guard my love, and bless his heart with patience!

Jaff. That I have patience, let our fate bear witness,
Who has ordained it so, that thou and I—
Thou the divinest good man e'er possessed,
And I the wretched'st of the race of man—
This very hour, without one tear, must part.

Belv. Part! must we part? Oh! am I then forsaken?
Will my love cast me off? have my misfortunes
Offended him so highly that he'll leave me?
Why drag you from me? whither are you going?
My dear! my life! my love!

Jaff. Oh, friends!

Belv. Speak to me.

Jaff. Take her from my heart;
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her; but with tenderest care
Relieve her troubles, and assuage her sorrows.

Ren. Rise, madam, and command amongst your servants.

Jaff. To you, sirs, and your honours, I bequeath her,
And with her this: when I prove unworthy—
[*Gives a dagger.*
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he who three whole happy years
Lay in her arms, and each kind night repeated
The passionate vows of still-increasing love,
Sent that reward for all her truth and sufferings.

Belv. Nay, take my life, since he has sold it cheaply;
Or send me to some distant clime your slave,
But let it be far off, lest my complainings
Should reach his guilty ears, and shake his peace.

Jaff. No, Belvidera, I've contrived thy honour:
Trust to my faith, and be but fortune kind
To me as I preserve that faith unbroken!
When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a height
Shall gather all the gazing world about thee,
To wonder what strange virtue placed thee there.
But if we ne'er meet more—

Belv. O thou unkind one!
Never meet more! have I deserved this from you?
Look on me, tell me; speak, thou dear deceiver;
Why am I separated from thy love?
If I am false, accuse me; but if true,
Don't, pr'ythee don't in poverty forsake me;
But pity the sad heart that's torn with parting.
Yet hear me! yet recall me—
[*Exeunt* RENAULT, BEDAMAR, *and* BELVIDERA.

Jaff. O my eyes,
Look not that way, but turn yourselves awhile

Into my heart, and be weaned altogether!
My friend, where art thou?

Pier. Here, my honour's brother.

Jaff. Is Belvidera gone?

Pier. Renault has led her
Back to her own apartment: but, by Heaven!
Thou must not see her more till our work's over.

Jaff. No?

Pier. Not for your life.

Jaff. O Pierre! wert thou but she,
How I could pull thee down into my heart,
Gaze on thee till my eye-strings cracked with love,
Till all my sinews, with its fire extended,
Fixed me upon the rack of ardent longing!
Then swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,
Come like a panting turtle to thy breast;
On thy soft bosom hovering, bill and play,
Confess the cause why last I fled away,
Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er,
And never follow false ambition more. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* AQUILINA'S *House.*

Enter AQUILINA *and her* Maid.

AQUIL. Tell him I am gone to bed: tell him I am not at home: tell him I've better company with me, or anything; tell him, in short, I will not see him, the eternal troublesome vexatious fool; he's worse company than an ignorant physician. I'll not be disturbed at these unseasonable hours.

Maid. But, madam, he's here already, just entered the doors.

Aquil. Turn him out again, you unnecessary, useless, giddy-brained ass! If he will not be gone, set the house a-fire, and burn us both: I had rather meet a toad in my dish than that old hideous animal in my chamber to-night.

Enter ANTONIO.[1]

Ant. Nacky, Nacky, Nacky—how dost do, Nacky? Hurry durry! I am come, little Nacky; past eleven

[1] The character of Antonio is a satire upon Sir Anthony Ashley-Cooper (b. 1621), one of the greatest Liberal statesmen of his time, but unscrupulous, machiavellic, and shifty. Pope (*Essay on Satire*) calls him our little Machiavel; for his "fiery soul which, working out its way, Fretted the pigmy body to

o'clock, a late hour; time in all conscience to go to bed, Nacky—Nacky did I say? Ay, Nacky; Aquilina, lina, lina, quilina, quilina, quilina, Aquilina, Naquilina, Naquilina, Acky, Acky, Nacky, Nacky, queen Nacky—come, let's to bed—you fubbs, you pug you—you little puss—purree tuzzy—I am a senator.

Aquil. You are a fool, I am sure.

Ant. May be so too, sweetheart. Never the worse senator for all that. Come, Nacky, Nacky, let's have a game at romp, Nacky.

Aquil. You would do well, signior, to be troublesome here no longer, but leave me to myself; be sober, and go home, sir.

Ant. Home, Madonna?

Aquil. Ay, home, sir. Who am I?

Ant. Madonna, as I take it, you are my—you are—thou art my little Nicky Nacky—that's all!

Aquil. I find you are resolved to be troublesome; and so, to make short of the matter in few words, I hate you, detest you, loathe you, I am weary of you, sick of you. Hang you, you are an old, silly, impertinent, impotent, solicitous coxcomb; crazy in your head and lazy in your body, love to be meddling with

decay, And o'er-informed the tenement of clay" (Dryden's *Absalom*). He was first a Royalist, then a Parliamentarian, later contributed to the Restoration; after this a Tory, and finally a Whig. He was a member of the "Cabal" administration, and was created by Charles II. first Baron Ashley, and then Earl of Shaftesbury. He was Lord Chancellor in 1672, and to him we owe the Habeas Corpus Act; he also contributed materially to make our judges independent of the Crown. He persecuted the Catholics under pretext of the Popish Plot; promoted the Exclusion Bill against the Duke of York, afterwards James II., as a Catholic; and advocated Monmouth's (son of Charles II. by Lucy Walters) claim to legitimacy. In 1681 he was impeached and sent to the Tower on a charge of high treason, but acquitted. He was, however, forced to retire to Holland, where he died in 1683.

every thing; and if you had not money, you are good for nothing.

Ant. Good for nothing! Hurry durry, I'll try that presently. Sixty-one years[1] old, and good for nothing! that's brave. [*To the Maid.*] Come, come, come, Mistress Fiddle-faddle, turn you out for a season; go, turn out, I say; it is our will and pleasure to be private some moments—out, out when you are bid too—[*Puts her out and locks the door.*] Good for nothing, you say?

Aquil. Why, what are you good for?

Ant. In the first place, madam, I am old, and consequently very wise, very wise, Madonna, d'ye mark that? in the second place, take notice, if you please, that I am a senator, and when I think fit can make speeches, Madonna. Hurry durry, I can make a speech in the Senate-house, now and then, would make your hair stand on end, Madonna.

Aquil. What care I for your speeches in the Senate-house? If you would be silent here, I should thank you.

Ant. Why, I can make speeches to thee too, my lovely Madonna; for example [*Takes out a purse of gold, and at every pause shakes it*] :—

My cruel fair one, since it is my fate
That you should with your servant angry prove,
Though late at night, I hope 'tis not too late
With this to gain reception for my love.

There's for thee, my little Nicky Nacky—take it; here, take it—I say take it, or I'll throw it at your head—how now, rebel!

Aquil. Truly, my illustrious senator, I must confess your honour is at present most profoundly eloquent indeed.

[1] This was precisely the age of Lord Shaftesbury. He died in the following year.

Ant. Very well: come, now let's sit down and think upon't a little—come sit, I say—sit down by me a little, my Nicky Nacky, hah—[*Sits down*] Hurry durry—good for nothing!

Aquil. No, sir; if you please, I can know my distance and stand.

Ant. Stand: how? Nacky up, and I down! Nay, then let me exclaim with the poet:—

> Show me a case more pitiful who can,
> A standing woman, and a falling man.

Hurry durry—not sit down—see this, ye gods! You won't sit down?

Aquil. No, sir.

Ant. Then look you, now, suppose me a bull, a Basan-bull, the bull of bulls, or any bull. Thus up I get, and with my brows thus bent—I broo, I say, I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't sit down, will you? I broo—— [*Bellows like a bull, and drives her about.*

Aquil. Well, sir; I must endure this. [*She sits down.*] Now your honour has been a bull, pray what beast will your worship please to be next?

Ant. Now I'll be a senator again, and thy lover, little Nicky Nacky! [*He sits by her.*] Ah, toad, toad, toad, toad! spit in my face a little, Nacky—spit in my face, pr'ythee spit in my face, never so little: spit but a little bit—spit, spit, spit, spit, when you are bid, I say; do, pr'ythee spit—now, now, now spit. What, you won't spit, will you? then I'll be a dog.

Aquil. A dog, my lord?

Ant. Ay, a dog—and I'll give thee this t'other purse to let me be a dog—and to use me like a dog a little. Hurry durry—I will—here 'tis.

[*Gives the purse.*

Aquil. Well; with all my heart. But let me beseech your dogship to play your tricks over as fast

as you can, that you may come to stinking the sooner, and be turned out of doors, as you deserve.

Ant. Ay, ay—no matter for that—[*He gets under the table*] — that shan't move me — now, bough waugh waugh, bough waugh! [*Barks like a dog.*

Aquil. Hold, hold, hold, sir, I beseech you; what is't you do? If curs bite, they must be kicked, sir. Do you see? kicked thus.

Ant. Ay, with all my heart: do, kick, kick on; now I am under the table, kick again—kick harder —harder yet. Bough waugh waugh, waugh, bough —odd, I'll have a snap at thy shins—bough waugh waugh, waugh, bough—odd, she kicks bravely.

Aquil. Nay then, I'll go another way to work with you; and I think here's an instrument fit for the purpose. [*Fetches a whip and a bell.*] What, bite your mistress, sirrah! out, out of doors, you dog, to kennel and be hanged! Bite your mistress by the legs, you rogue! [*She whips him.*

Ant. Nay, pr'ythee Nacky, now thou art too loving: hurry durry, odd, I'll be a dog no longer.

Aquil. Nay, none of your fawning and grinning: but begone, or here's the discipline: what, bite your mistress by the legs, you mongrel? Out of doors—hout, hout, to kennel, sirrah! go.

Ant. This is very barbarous usage, Nacky, very barbarous: look you, I will not go—I will not stir from the door, that I resolve—hurry durry, what, shut me out? [*She whips him out.*

Aquil. Ay; and if you come here any more to-night, I'll have my footmen lug you, you cur! What, bite your poor mistress Nacky, sirrah?

Enter Maid.

Maid. Heavens, madam! what's the matter? [*He howls at the door like a dog.*

Aquil. Call my footmen hither presently.

Enter two Footmen.

Maid. They are here already, madam; the house is all alarmed with a strange noise, that nobody knows what to make of.

Aquil. Go all of you and turn that troublesome beast in the next room out of my house; if I ever see him within these walls again, without my leave for his admittance, you sneaking rogues, I'll have you poisoned all, poisoned, like rats; every corner of the house shall stink of one of you: go, and learn hereafter to know my pleasure. [*Exeunt* Footmen *and* Maid.] So, now for my Pierre:

Thus when the godlike lover was displeased,
We sacrifice our fool, and he's appeased. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the same.*

Enter BELVIDERA.

Belv. I'm sacrificed! I'm sold! betrayed to shame!
Inevitable ruin has inclosed me!
No sooner was I to my bed repaired,
To weigh and (weeping) ponder my condition,
But the old hoary wretch, to whose false care
My peace and honour was entrusted came,
Like Tarquin, ghastly with infernal lust.
O thou Roman Lucrece!
Thou couldst find friends to vindicate thy wrong;
I never had but one, and he's proved false;
He that should guard my virtue, has betrayed it;
Left me! undone me! oh, that I could hate him!
Where shall I go? oh, whither, whither wander?

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. Can Belvidera want a resting-place,
When these poor arms are open to receive her?

Oh, 'tis in vain to struggle with desires
Strong as my love to thee; for every moment
I'm from thy sight, the heart within my bosom
Moans like a tender infant in its cradle,
Whose nurse had left it: come, and with the songs
Of gentle love, persuade it to its peace.

Belv. I fear the stubborn wanderer will not own me;
'Tis grown a rebel to be ruled no longer,
Scorns the indulgent bosom that first lulled it;
And, like a disobedient child, disdains
The soft authority of Belvidera.

Jaff. There was a time—

Belv. Yes, yes, there was a time
When Belvidera's tears, her cries, and sorrows,
Were not despised; when if she chanced to sigh,
Or look but sad—there was indeed a time
When Jaffier would have ta'en her in his arms,
Eased her declining head upon his breast,
And never left her till he found the cause.
But let her now weep seas,
Cry till she rend the earth, sigh till she burst
Her heart asunder; still he bears it all,
Deaf as the wind, and as the rocks unshaken.

Jaff. Have I been deaf? am I that rock unmoved,
Against whose root tears beat, and sighs are sent
In vain? have I beheld thy sorrows calmly?
Witness against me, Heavens, have I done this?
Then bear me in a whirlwind back again,
And let that angry dear one ne'er forgive me!
Oh, thou too rashly censurest[1] of my love!
Couldst thou but think how I have spent this night,
Dark and alone, no pillow to my head,
Rest in my eyes, nor quiet in my heart,
Thou wouldst not, Belvidera, sure thou wouldst not
Talk to me thus; but like a pitying angel,

[1] Judgest.

Spreading thy wings, come settle on my breast,
And hatch warm comfort there, ere sorrows freeze it.
Belv. Why then, poor mourner, in what baleful corner
Hast thou been talking with that witch the Night?
On what cold stone hast thou been stretched along,
Gathering the grumbling winds about thy head,
To mix with theirs the accents of thy woes?
Oh, now I find the cause my love forsakes me!
I am no longer fit to bear a share
In his concernments: my weak female virtue
Must not be trusted; 'tis too frail and tender.
Jaff. O Portia! Portia! what a soul was thine!
Belv. That Portia was a woman; and when Brutus,
Big with the fate of Rome—Heaven guard thy safety!—
Concealed from her the labours of his mind,
She let him see her blood was great as his,
Flowed from a spring as noble, and a heart
Fit to partake his troubles as his love.
Fetch, fetch that dagger back, the dreadful dower
Thou gavest last night in parting with me; strike it
Here to my heart; and as the blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as Cato's daughter's.
Jaff. Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy,
Unworthy so much virtue: teach me how
I may deserve such matchless love as thine,
And see with what attention I'll obey thee.
Belv. Do not despise me: that's the all I ask.
Jaff. Despise thee! hear me—
Belv. Oh, thy charming tongue
Is but too well acquainted with my weakness;
Knows, let it name but love, my melting heart
Dissolves within my breast; till with closed eyes
I reel into thy arms, and all's forgotten.
Jaff. What shall I do?
Belv. Tell me—be just, and tell me,

Why dwells that busy cloud upon thy face?
Why am I made a stranger? why that sigh,
And I not know the cause? why when the world
Is wrapped in rest, why chooses then my love
To wander up and down in horrid darkness,
Loathing his bed, and these desiring arms?
Why are these eyes blood-shot with tedious watching?
Why starts he now, and looks as if he wished
His fate were finished? Tell me, ease my fear,
Lest, when we next time meet, I want the power
To search into the sickness of thy mind,
But talk as wildly then as thou look'st now.

Jaff. O Belvidera!

Belv. Why was I last night
Delivered to a villain?

Jaff. Ha, a villain!

Belv. Yes! to a villain! Why at such an hour
Meets that assembly, all made up of wretches
That look as hell had drawn them into league?
Why, I in this hand, and in that a dagger,
Was I delivered with such dreadful ceremonies?—
"To you, sirs, and your honour, I bequeath her,
And with her this: whene'er I prove unworthy—
You know the rest—then strike it to her heart!"
Oh! why's that "rest" concealed from me? Must I
Be made the hostage of a hellish trust?—
For such I know I am; that's all my value!
But by the love and loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the bondage of these slaves;
Straight to the Senate, tell them all I know,
All that I think, all that my fears inform me!

Jaff. Is this the Roman virtue? this the blood
That boasts its purity with Cato's daughter?
Would she have e'er betrayed her Brutus?

Belv. No;
For Brutus trusted her: wert thou so kind,
What would not Belvidera suffer for thee?

Jaff. I shall undo myself, and tell thee all.
Belv. Look not upon me as I am a woman,
But as a bone, thy wife, thy friend, who long
Has had admission to thy heart, and there
Studied the virtues of thy gallant nature:
Thy constancy, thy courage, and thy truth,
Have been my daily lesson; I have learnt them,
Am bold as thou, can suffer or despise
The worst of fates for thee; and with thee share them.
Jaff. Oh, you divinest powers! look down and hear
My prayers! instruct me to reward this virtue!
Yet think a little, ere thou tempt me further;
Think I've a tale to tell will shake thy nature,
Melt all this boasted constancy thou talk'st of,
Into vile tears and despicable sorrows:
Then if thou shouldst betray me!
Belv. Shall I swear?
Jaff. No; do not swear,—I would not violate
Thy tender nature with so rude a bond,—
But as thou hopest to see me live my days,
And love thee long, lock this within thy breast:—
I've bound myself by all the strictest sacraments,
Divine and human—
Belv. Speak!
Jaff. To kill thy father.
Belv. My father!
Jaff. Nay, the throats of the whole Senate
Shall bleed, my Belvidera: he amongst us
That spares his father, brother, or his friend,
Is damned. How rich and beauteous will the face
Of ruin look, when these wide streets run blood,
I and the glorious partners of my fortune
Shouting, and striding o'er the prostrate dead,
Still to new waste; whilst thou, far off in safety
Smiling, shall see the wonders of our daring;
And when night comes, with praise and love receive
Belv. Oh! [me!

Jaff. Have a care, and shrink not, even in thought!
For if thou dost—
Belv. I know it, thou wilt kill me.
Do, strike thy sword into this bosom: lay me
Dead on the earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
Murder my father! though his cruel nature
Has persecuted me to my undoing,
Driven me to basest wants, can I behold him,
With smiles of vengeance, butchered in his age?
The sacred fountain of my life destroyed?
And canst thou shed the blood that gave me being?
Nay, be a traitor too, and sell thy country?
Can thy great heart descend so vilely low,
Mix with hired slaves, bravos, and common stabbers,
Nose-slitters, alley-lurking villains—join
With such a crew, and take a ruffian's wages,
To cut the throats of wretches as they sleep?
Jaff. Thou wrong'st me, Belvidera! I've engaged
With men of souls, fit to reform the ills
Of all mankind: there's not a heart amongst them,
But's stout as death, yet honest as the nature
Of man first made, ere fraud and vice were fashions.
Belv. What's he to whose cursed hands last night
thou gavest me?
Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a story
Would rouse thy lion-heart out of its den,
And make it rage with terrifying fury.
Jaff. Speak on, I charge thee!
Belv. O my love! if e'er
Thy Belvidera's peace deserved thy care,
Remove me from this place—last night, last night!
Jaff. Distract me not, but give me all the truth.
Belv. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,
Left in the power of that old son of mischief;
No sooner was I lain on my sad bed,
But that vile wretch approached me, loose, unbut-
Ready for violation: then my heart [toned,

Throbbed with its fears: oh, how I wept and sighed,
And shrunk and trembled, wished in vain for him
That should protect me! Thou, alas! wert gone.

Jaff. Patience, sweet Heaven! till I make vengeance sure.

Belv. He drew the hideous dagger forth thou gavest him,
And with upbraiding smiles, he said, "Behold it;
This is the pledge of a false husband's love":
And in my arms then pressed, and would have clasped me;
But with my cries I scared his coward-heart,
Till he withdrew, and muttered vows to hell.
These are thy friends! with these thy life, thy honour,
Thy love, all's staked, and all will go to ruin!

Jaff. No more: I charge thee keep this secret close;
Clear up thy sorrows, look as if thy wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a friend,
As no complaint were made. No more; retire,
Retire, my life, and doubt not of my honour;
I'll heal its failings and deserve thy love.

Belv. Oh, should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaff. Return no more! I would not live without thee
Another night, to purchase the creation.

Belv. When shall we meet again?

Jaff. Anon, at twelve:
I'll steal myself to thy expecting arms,
Come like a travelled dove, and bring thee peace.

Belv. Indeed?

Jaff. By all our loves!

Belv. 'Tis hard to part:
But sure no falsehood ever looked so fairly.
Farewell—remember twelve. [*Exit.*

Jaff. Let Heaven forget me
When I remember not thy truth, thy love.
How cursed is my condition! tossed and justled

From every corner; fortune's common fool,
The jest of rogues, an instrumental ass
For villains to lay loads of shame upon,
And drive about just for their ease and scorn.

Enter PIERRE.

Pier. Jaffier!
Jaff. Who calls?
Pier. A friend, that could have wished
To have found thee otherwise employed: what, hunt
A wife on the dull foil! sure a staunch husband
Of all hounds is the dullest. Wilt thou never,
Never be weaned from caudles and confections?
What feminine tale hast thou been listening to
Of unaired shirts, catarrhs and toothache got
By thin-soled shoes? Damnation! that a fellow,
Chosen to be a sharer in the destruction
Of a whole people, should sneak thus in corners
To ease his fulsome lusts, and fool his mind!
Jaff. May not a man then trifle out an hour
With a kind woman, and not wrong his calling?
Pier. Not in a cause like ours.
Jaff. Then, friend, our cause
Is in a damned condition: for I'll tell thee,
That canker-worm called lechery has touched it;
'Tis tainted vilely. Wouldst thou think it, Renault
(That mortified, old, withered, winter-rogue)
Loves simple fornication like a priest?
I found him out for watering at my wife:
He visited her last night, like a kind guardian.
Faith, she has some temptations, that's the truth on't.
Pier. He durst not wrong his trust?
Jaff. 'Twas something late, though,
To take the freedom of a lady's chamber.
Pier. Was she in bed?
Jaff. Yes, faith, in virgin sheets
White as her bosom, Pierre, dished neatly up,

Might tempt a weaker appetite to taste.
Oh, how the old fox stunk, I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him!
Pier. Patience guide me!
He used no violence?
Jaff. No, no! out on't, violence!
Played with her neck, brushed her with his gray beard,
Struggled and towzed, tickled her till she squeaked a little,
May be, or so—but not a jot of violence.
Pier. Damn him!
Jaff. Ay, so say I: but hush, no more on't;
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no monster,[1] yet: though no man knows
What fate he's born to. Sure 'tis near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding orders.
Will the ambassador be here in person?
Pier. No; he has sent commission to that villain,
Renault, to give the executing charge;
I'd have thee be a man, if possible,
And keep thy temper; for a brave revenge
Ne'er comes too late.
Jaff. Fear not, I'm cool as patience:
Had he completed my dishonour, rather
Than hazard the success our hopes are ripe for,
I'd bear it all with mortifying virtue.
Pier. He's yonder coming this way through the hall;
His thoughts seem full.
Jaff. Pr'ythee retire, and leave me
With him alone: I'll put him to some trial,
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.
Pier. Be careful then. [*Exit.*
Jaff. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.—
What, be a devil! take a damning oath

[1] *i.e.* Cuckold.

For shedding native blood! can there be a sin
In merciful repentance? O this villain!

Enter RENAULT.

Ren. Perverse! and peevish! what a slave is man,
To let his itching flesh thus get the better of him!
Despatch the tool her husband—that were well—
Who's there?

Jaff. A man.

Ren. My friend, my near ally!
The hostage of your faith, my beauteous charge
Is very well.

Jaff. Sir, are you sure of that?
Stands she in perfect health? beats her pulse even?
Neither too hot nor cold?

Ren. What means that question?

Jaff. Oh, women have fantastic constitutions,
Inconstant as their wishes, always wavering,
And never fixed. Was it not boldly done,
Even at first sight to trust the thing I loved—,
A tempting treasure too!—with youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine?—but thou art honest.

Ren. Who dares accuse me?

Jaff. Cursed be him that doubts
Thy virtue! I have tried it, and declare,
Were I to choose a guardian of my honour,
I'd put it in thy keeping; for I know thee.

Ren. Know me?

Jaff. Ay, know thee: there's no falsehood in thee,
Thou look'st just as thou art: let us embrace.
Now wouldst thou cut my throat, or I cut thine?

Ren. You dare not do it.

Jaff. You lie, sir.

Ren. How!

Jaff. No more.
'Tis a base world, and must reform, that's all.

Enter SPINOSA, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO, DURAND, BRAINVILLE, *and the rest of the* Conspirators.

Ren. Spinosa! Theodore!
Spin. The same.
Ren. You are welcome!
Spin. You are trembling, sir.
Ren. 'Tis a cold night indeed, I am aged,
Full of decay and natural infirmities:
We shall be warm, my friend, I hope, to-morrow.

Re-enter PIERRE.

Pier. [*Aside to* JAFFIER.] 'Twas not well done
thou shouldst have strokèd him,
And not have galled him.
Jaff. [*Aside to* PIERRE.] Damn him! let him chew on it.
Heaven! where am I? beset with cursèd fiends,
That wait to damn me. What a devil's man,
When he forgets his nature! Hush, my heart!
Ren. My friends, 'tis late; are we assembled all?
Where's Theodore?
Theo. At hand.
Ren. Spinosa?
Spin. Here.
Ren. Brainville?
Brain. I'm ready.
Ren. Durand and Brabe?
Dur. Command us;
We are both prepared.
Ren. Mezzana, Revillido,
Ternon, Retrosi? oh, you're men, I find,
Fit to behold your fate, and meet her summons;
To-morrow's rising sun must see you all
Decked in your honours! Are the soldiers ready?
All. All, all.

Ren.[1] You, Durand, with your thousand, must possess
St. Mark's; you, captain, know your charge already;
'Tis to secure the Ducal Palace; you,
Brabe, with a hundred more, must gain the Secque;
With the like number, Brainville, to the Procurale.
Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
Till in each place you post sufficient guards:
Then sheathe your swords in every breast you meet.

Jaff. [*Aside.*] O reverend cruelty! Damned bloody villain!

Ren. During this execution, Durand, you
Must, in the midst, keep your battalia fast;
And, Theodore, be sure to plant the cannon
That may command the streets; whilst Revillido,
Mezzana, Ternon, and Retrosi guard you.
This done, we'll give the general alarm,
Apply petards, and force the arsenal gates;
Then fire the city round in several places,
Or with our cannon, if it dare resist,
Batter it to ruin. But, above all, I charge you,
Shed blood enough, spare neither sex nor age,
Name nor condition; if there live a senator
After to-morrow, though the dullest rogue
That e'er said nothing, we have lost our ends;
If possible, let's kill the very name
Of senator, and bury it in blood.

Jaff. [*Aside.*] Merciless, horrid slave!—[*Aloud.*] Ay, blood enough—
Shed blood enough, old Renault! how thou charm'st me!

Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell till [fate
Join us again, or separate us ever:
First, let's embrace; Heaven knows who next shall [thus
Wing ye together: but let's all remember

[1] This scene, particularly the charge of Renault, is closely imitated from Saint-Réal.

We wear no common cause upon our swords;
Let each man think that on his single virtue
Depends the good and fame of all the rest,
Eternal honour or perpetual infamy.
Let us remember, through what dreadful hazards
Propitious fortune hitherto has led us;
How often on the brink of some discovery
Have we stood tottering, yet still kept our ground
So well, the busiest searchers ne'er could follow
Those subtle tracks which puzzled all suspicion.
You droop, sir.

Jaff. No; with most profound attention
I've heard it all, and wonder at thy virtue.

Ren. Though there be yet few hours 'twixt them and ruin,
Are not the Senate lulled in full security,
Quiet and satisfied, as fools are always?
Never did so profound repose forerun
Calamity so great: nay, our good fortune
Has blinded the most piercing of mankind,
Strengthened the fearfullest, charmed the most suspectful,
Confounded the most subtle: for we live,
We live, my friends, and quickly shall our life
Prove fatal to these tyrants. Let's consider
That we destroy oppression, avarice,
A people nursed up equally with vices
And loathsome lusts, which nature most abhors,
And such as without shame she cannot suffer.

Jaff. O Belvidera, take me to thy arms,
And show me where's my peace, for I have lost it.
[*Exit.*

Ren. Without the least remorse, then, let's resolve
With fire and sword to exterminate these tyrants;
And when we shall behold those cursed tribunals
Stained by the tears and sufferings of the innocent,
Burning with flames, rather from Heaven than ours;

The raging, furious, and unpitying soldier
Pulling his reeking dagger from the bosoms
Of gasping wretches; death in every quarter,
With all that sad disorder can produce,
To make a spectacle of horror; then,
Then let us call to mind, my dearest friends,
That there is nothing pure upon the earth;
That the most valued things have most allays,[1]
And that in change of all those vile enormities,
Under whose weight this wretched country labours,
The means are only in our hands to cure them.

Pier. And may those powers above that are propitious
To gallant minds record this cause, and bless it!

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
Should there, my friends, be found amongst us one
False to this glorious enterprise, what fate,
What vengeance were enough for such a villain?

Eliot. Death here without repentance, hell hereafter.

Ren. Let that be my lot, if as here I stand,
Listed by fate amongst her darling sons,
Though I had one only brother, dear by all
The strictest ties of nature; though one hour
Had given us birth, one fortune fed our wants,
One only love, and that but of each other,
Still filled our minds,—could I have such a friend
Joined in this cause, and had but ground to fear
He meant foul play, may this right hand drop from me,
If I'd not hazard all my future peace,
And stab him to the heart before you. Who,
Who would do less? wouldst not thou, Pierre, the same?

Pier. You've singled me, sir, out for this hard question,

[1] Alloys.

As if 'twere started only for my sake.
Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my bosom,
Search it with all your swords! Am I a traitor?
Ren. No; but I fear your late-commended friend
Is little less. Come, sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our safety. Where's this Jaffier?
Spin. He left the room just now in strange disorder.
Ren. Nay, there is danger in him: I observed him,
During the time I took for explanation.
He was transported from most deep attention
To a confusion which he could not smother;
His looks grew full of sadness and surprise,
All which betrayed a wavering spirit in him,
That laboured with reluctancy and sorrow.
What's requisite for safety must be done
With speedy execution: he remains
Yet in our power: I for my own part wear
A dagger.
Pier. Well.
Ren. And I could wish it—
Pier. Where?
Ren. Buried in his heart.
Pier. Away! we're yet all friends;
No more of this, 'twill breed ill blood amongst us.
Spin. Let us all draw our swords, and search the house,
Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding
O'er his cold fears, and each man kill his share of him.
Pier. Who talks of killing? Who's he'll shed the blood
That's dear to me? Is't you? or you? or you, sir?
What, not one speak? how you stand gaping all
On your grave oracle, your wooden god there!
Yet not a word. Then, sir—[*To* RENAULT]—I'll tell you a secret;—
Suspicion's but at best a coward's virtue!

Ren. A coward! [*Handles his sword.*
Pier. Put, put up thy sword, old man,
Thy hand shakes at it. Come, let's heal this breach,
I am too hot; we yet may all live friends.
Spin. Till we are safe, our friendship cannot be so.
Pier. Again? who's that?
Spin. 'Twas I.
Theo. And I.
Rev. And I.
Eliot. And all.
Ren. Who are on my side?
Spin. Every honest sword.
Let's die like men, and not be sold like slaves.
Pier. One such word more, by Heaven, I'll to the Senate,
And hang ye all like dogs in clusters.
Why peep your coward swords half out their shells?
Why do you not all brandish them like mine?
You fear to die, and yet dare talk of killing!
Ren. Go to the Senate and betray us; hasten,
Secure thy wretched life; we fear to die
Less than thou darest be honest.
Pier. That's rank falsehood.
Fear'st not thou death? fie! there's a knavish itch
In that salt blood, an utter foe to smarting.
Had Jaffier's wife proved kind, he had still been true.
Faugh! how that stinks!
Thou die! thou kill my friend! or thou, or thou;
Or thou, with that lean, withered, wretched face!
Away! disperse all to your several charges,
And meet to-morrow where your honour calls you;
I'll bring that man whose blood you so much thirst for,
And you shall see him venture for you fairly.
Hence, hence, I say. [*Exit* RENAULT *angrily.*
Spin. I fear we've been to blame,
And done too much.

Theo. 'Twas too far urged against the man you loved.

Rev. Here, take our swords, and crush them with [your feet.

Spin. Forgive us, gallant friend.

Pier. Nay, now you've found
The way to melt and cast me as you will.
I'll fetch this friend, and give him to your mercy:
Nay, he shall die, if you will take him from me;
For your repose, I'll quit my heart's jewel;
But would not have him torn away by villains
And spiteful villany.

Spin. No; may you both
For ever live, and fill the world with fame!

Pier. Now you are too kind. Whence rose all this discord?
Oh, what a dangerous precipice have we 'scaped!
How near a fall was all we had long been building!
What an eternal blot had stained our glories,
If one, the bravest and the best of men,
Had fallen a sacrifice to rash suspicion!
Butchered by those whose cause he came to cherish!
Oh, could you know him all as I have known him,
How good he is, how just, how true, how brave,
You would not leave this place till you had seen him,
Humbled yourselves before him, kissed his feet,
And gained remission for the worst of follies.
Come but to-morrow, all your doubts shall end;
And to your loves me better recommend,
That I've preserved your fame, and saved my friend.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE I.—*A Public Place.*

Enter JAFFIER *and* BELVIDERA.

JAFF. Where dost thou lead me? Every step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled limb
Of a racked friend. O my dear charming ruin!
Where are we wandering?

Belv. To eternal honour;
To do a deed shall chronicle thy name
Among the glorious legends of those few
That have saved sinking nations: thy renown
Shall be the future song of all the virgins,
Who by thy piety have been preserved
From horrid violation; every street
Shall be adorned with statues to thy honour,
And at thy feet this great inscription written,
"Remember him that propped the fall of Venice."

Jaff. Rather remember him who, after all
The sacred bonds of oaths and holier friendship,
In fond compassion to a woman's tears,
Forgot his manhood, virtue, truth, and honour,
To sacrifice the bosom that relieved him.
Why wilt thou damn me?

Belv. O inconstant man!
How will you promise! how will you deceive!
Do, return back, replace me in my bondage;
Tell all thy friends how dangerously thou lovest me;
And let thy dagger do its bloody office.
O, that kind dagger, Jaffier, how 'twill look
Stuck through my heart, drenched in my blood to the hilts!
Whilst these poor dying eyes shall with their tears
No more torment thee;—then thou wilt be free.
Or if thou think'st it nobler, let me live
Till I'm a victim to the hateful lust
Of that infernal devil, that old fiend
That's damned himself, and would undo mankind.
Last night, my love!

Jaff. Name, name it not again;
It shows a beastly image to my fancy,
Will wake me into madness. O, the villain
That durst approach such purity as thine
On terms so vile! Destruction, swift destruction
Fall on my coward head, and make my name
The common scorn of fools, if I forgive him!
If I forgive him! if I not revenge
With utmost rage, and most unstaying fury,
Thy suffering, dear darling of my life.

Belv. Delay no longer then, but to the Senate;
And tell the dismallest story ever uttered;
Tell them what bloodshed, rapines, desolations,
Have been prepared; how near's the fatal hour;
Save thy poor country, save the reverend blood
Of all its nobles, which to-morrow's dawn
Must else see shed; save the poor tender lives
Of all those little infants which the swords
Of murderers are whetting for this moment;
Think thou already hear'st their dying screams,
Think that thou seest their sad distracted mothers
Kneeling before thy feet, and begging pity,

With torn dishevelled hair and streaming eyes,
Their naked mangled breasts besmeared with blood,
And even the milk, with which their fondled babes
Softly they hushed, dropping in anguish from them:
Think thou seest this, and then consult thy heart.

Jaff. Oh!

Belv. Think, too, if thou lose this present minute,
What miseries the next day brings upon thee.
Imagine all the horrors of that night,
Murder and rapine, waste and desolation,
Confusedly ranging. Think what then may prove
My lot! The ravisher may then come safe,
And, 'midst the terror of the public ruin,
Do a damned deed; perhaps too lay a train
May catch thy life: then where will be revenge,
The dear revenge that's due to such a wrong?

Jaff. By all Heaven's powers, prophetic truth dwells in thee,
For every word thou speak'st strikes through my heart
Like a new light, and shows it how it has wandered;
Just what thou'st made me, take me, Belvidera,
And lead me to the place where I'm to say
This bitter lesson; where I must betray
My truth, my virtue, constancy, and friends:—
Must I betray my friend? Ah! take me quickly,
Secure me well before that thought's renewed;
If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

Belv. Hast thou a friend more dear than Belvidera?

Jaff. No; thou'rt my soul itself; wealth, friendship, honour,
All present joys and earnest of all future,
Are summed in thee: methinks, when in thy arms
Thus leaning on thy breast, one minute's more
Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.
Why was such happiness not given me pure?
Why dashed with cruel wrongs, and bitter wantings?

Come, lead me forward now, like a tame lamb
To sacrifice. Thus in his fatal garlands,
Decked fine and pleased, the wanton skips and plays,
Trots by the enticing flattering priestess' side,
And, much transported with his little pride,
Forgets his dear companions of the plain;
Till, by her bound, he's on the altar lain,
Yet then too hardly bleats, such pleasure's in the pain.

Enter Officer *and six* Guards.

Offi. Stand; who goes there?

Belv. Friends.

Jaff. Friends, Belvidera! hide me from my friends.
By Heaven, I'd rather see the face of hell
Than meet the man I love.

Offi. But what friends are you?

Belv. Friends to the Senate and the state of Venice.

Offi. My orders are, to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring them to the Council,
Who now are sitting.

Jaff. Sir, you shall be obeyed.
Hold, brutes! stand off, none of your paws upon me.
Now the lot's cast, and, fate, do what thou wilt.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Senate House.*

The Duke of VENICE, PRIULI, ANTONIO, *and eight other* Senators *discovered in session.*

Duke. Antony, Priuli, senators of Venice,
Speak; why are we assembled here this night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The state of Venice' honour, or its safety?

Priu. Could words express the story I've to tell you
Fathers, these tears were useless, these sad tears

That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
We all should weep; tear off these purple robes,
And wrap ourselves in sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad earth, and cry aloud to Heaven.
Heaven knows if yet there be an hour to come
Ere Venice be no more!

All the Senators. How!

Priu. Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping ruin.
Within this city's formed a dark conspiracy
To massacre us all, our wives and children,
Kindred and friends; our palaces and temples
To lay in ashes: nay, the hour too fixed;
The swords, for aught I know, drawn even this moment,
And the wild waste begun. From unknown hands
I had this warning: but, if we are men,
Let's not be tamely butchered, but do something
That may inform the world in after-ages
Our virtue was not ruined, though we were.

[*Voices without*] Room, room, make room for some prisoners!

2nd Senat. Let's raise the city.

Enter Officer *and* Guard.

Priu. Speak there, what disturbance?

Offi. Two prisoners have the guard seized in the streets,
Who say they come to inform this reverend Senate
About the present danger.

All. Give them entrance.—

Enter JAFFIER *and* BELVIDERA, *guarded.*

Well; who are you?

Jaff. A villain.

Ant. Short and pithy.
The man speaks well.

Jaff. Would every man that hears me
Would deal so honestly, and own his title!
Duke. 'Tis rumoured that a plot has been contrived
Against this state; that you've a share in't too.
If you're a villain, to redeem your honour,
Unfold the truth, and be restored with mercy.
Jaff. Think not that I, to save my life, come hither;
I know its value better; but in pity
To all those wretches whose unhappy dooms
Are fixed and sealed. You see me here before you,
The sworn and covenanted foe of Venice;
But use me as my dealings may deserve,
And I may prove a friend.
Duke. The slave capitulates![1]
Give him the tortures.
Jaff. That you dare not do;
Your fears won't let you, nor the longing itch
To hear a story which you dread the truth of,—
Truth, which the fear of smart shall ne'er get from me.
Cowards are scared with threatenings; boys are whipped
Into confessions: but a steady mind
Acts of itself, ne'er asks the body counsel.
Give him the tortures! Name but such a thing
Again, by Heaven, I'll shut these lips for ever;
Not all your racks, your engines, or your wheels
Shall force a groan away that you may guess at.
Ant. A bloody-minded fellow, I'll warrant; a damned bloody-minded fellow.
Duke. Name your conditions.
Jaff. For myself full pardon,
Besides the lives of two and twenty friends
[*Delivers a list.*
Whose names are here enrolled: nay, let their crimes
Be ne'er so monstrous, I must have the oaths

[1] Proposes conditions to us.

And sacred promise of this reverend council,
That in a full assembly of the Senate
The thing I ask be ratified. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the secrets of your danger.

All. We'll swear.

Duke. Propose the oath.

Jaff. By all the hopes
Ye have of peace and happiness hereafter,
Swear.

All. We all swear.

Jaff. To grant me what I've asked,
Ye swear?

All. We swear.

Jaff. And as ye keep the oath,
May you and your posterity be blessed,
Or cursed for ever!

All. Else be cursed for ever!

Jaff. Then here's the list, and with it the full disclose
Of all that threatens you. Now, fate, thou'st caught me. [*Delivers another paper.*

Ant. Why, what a dreadful catalogue of cut-throats is here! I'll warrant you, not one of these fellows but has a face like a lion. I dare not so much as read their names over.

Duke. Give order that all diligent search be made
To seize these men; their characters are public:
The paper intimates their rendezvous
To be at the house of a famed Grecian courtesan,
Called Aquilina; see that place secured.

Ant. What, my Nicky Nacky, hurry durry, Nicky Nacky in the plot?—I'll make a speech.—
Most noble senators,
What headlong apprehension drives you on,
Right noble, wise, and truly solid senators,
To violate the laws and right of nations?

The lady is a lady of renown.
'Tis true, she holds a house of fair reception,
And though I say it myself, as many more
Can say as well as I—
2nd Senat. My lord, long speeches
Are frivolous here, when dangers are so near us.
We all well know your interest in that lady;
The world talks loud on't.
Ant. Verily, I have done,
I say no more.
Duke. But, since he has declared
Himself concerned, pray, captain, take great caution
To treat the fair one as becomes her character,
And let her bed-chamber be searched with decency.
You, Jaffier, must with patience bear till morning
To be our prisoner.
Jaff. Would the chains of death
Had bound me fast ere I had known this minute!
I've done a deed will make my story hereafter
Quoted in competition with all ill ones:
The history of my wickedness shall run
Down through the low traditions of the vulgar,
And boys be taught to tell the tale of Jaffier.
Duke. Captain, withdraw your prisoner.
Jaff. Sir, if possible,
Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me;
Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself, and this day's guilt and falsehood.
Cruel remembrance, how shall I appease thee!
[*Exeunt* JAFFIER *and* BELVIDERA, *guarded.*
[*Voices without*] More traitors; room, room, make room there.
Duke. How's this! Guards!
Where are our guards? Shut up the gates; the treason's
Already at our doors.

Enter Officer.

Offi. My lords, more traitors;
Seized in the very act of consultation;
Furnished with arms and instruments of mischief.—
Bring in the prisoners.

Enter PIERRE, RENAULT, THEODORE, ELIOT, REVILLIDO, *and other* Conspirators, *in fetters, guarded.*

Pier. You, my lords and fathers
(As you are pleased to call yourselves) of Venice,
If you sit here to guide the course of justice,
Why these disgraceful chains upon the limbs
That have so often laboured in your service?
Are these the wreaths of triumphs ye bestow
On those that bring you conquests home, and honours?

Duke. Go on; you shall be heard, sir.

Ant. And be hanged, too, I hope.

Pier. Are these the trophies I've deserved for fighting
Your battles with confederated powers?
When winds and seas conspired to overthrow you,
And brought the fleets of Spain to your own harbours;
When you, great Duke, shrunk trembling in your palace,
And saw your wife, the Adriatic, ploughed,
Like a lewd whore, by bolder prows than yours,
Stepped not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians
The task of honour, and the way to greatness;
Raised you from your capitulating fears,
To stipulate the terms of sued-for peace?
And this my recompense? If I'm a traitor,
Produce my charge; or show the wretch that's base enough
And brave enough to tell me I'm a traitor.

Duke. Know you one Jaffier?

[*All the* Conspirators ***murmur.***

Pier. Yes, and know his virtue.

His justice, truth, his general worth, and sufferings
From a hard father, taught me first to love him.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Re-enter JAFFIER, *guarded.*

Pier. My friend too bound! nay, then,
Our fate has conquered us, and we must fall.
Why droops the man whose welfare's so much mine,
They're but one thing? These reverend tyrants, Jaffier,
Call us all traitors: art thou one, my brother?

Jaff. To thee I am the falsest, veriest slave
That e'er betrayed a generous, trusting friend,
And gave up honour to be sure of ruin.
All our fair hopes, which morning was to have crowned,
Has this cursed tongue o'erthrown.

Pier. So, then, all's over:
Venice has lost her freedom; I my life.
No more; farewell.

Duke. Say, will you make confession
Of your vile deeds, and trust the Senate's mercy?

Pier. Cursed be your Senate; cursed your constitution;
The curse of growing factions and division
Still vex your councils, shake your public safety,
And make the robes of government you wear,
Hateful to you, as these base chains to me!

Duke. Pardon, or death?

Pier. Death, honourable death!

Ren. Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give.

All Conspir. No shameful bonds, but honourable death.

Duke. Break up the council. Captain, guard your prisoners.
Jaffier, you're free, but these must wait for judgment.
[*Exeunt all the* Senators.[1]

[1] In the acting copy of the play all the conspirators except Pierre and Jaffier are led out here.

Pier. Come, where's my dungeon? lead me to my straw:
It will not be the first time I've lodged hard
To do your Senate service.
Jaff. Hold one moment.
Pier. Who's he disputes the judgment of the Senate?
Presumptuous rebel—on— [*Strikes* JAFFIER.
Jaff. By Heaven, you stir not!
I must be heard, I must have leave to speak.
Thou hast disgraced me, Pierre, by a vile blow:
Had not a dagger done thee nobler justice?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
For I am fallen beneath the basest injuries;
Yet look upon me with an eye of mercy,
With pity and with charity behold me;
Shut not thy heart against a friend's repentance,
But, as there dwells a godlike nature in thee,
Listen with mildness to my supplications.
Pier. What whining monk art thou? what holy cheat,
That wouldst encroach upon my credulous ears,
And cant'st thus vilely? Hence! I know thee not.
Dissemble and be nasty: leave me, hypocrite.
Jaff. Not know me, Pierre?
Pier. No, know thee not: what art thou?
Jaff. Jaffier, thy friend, thy once loved, valued friend,
Though now deservedly scorned, and used most hardly.
Pier. Thou Jaffier! thou my once loved, valued friend?
By Heavens, thou liest! The man so called, my friend,
Was generous, honest, faithful, just, and valiant,
Noble in mind, and in his person lovely,
Dear to my eyes and tender to my heart:
But thou, a wretched, base, false, worthless coward,
Poor even in soul, and loathsome in thy aspect;

All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
Pr'ythee avoid, nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful, that my nature's chilled at.
Jaff. I have not wronged thee, by these tears I have not,
But still am honest, true, and hope, too, valiant;
My mind still full of thee: therefore still noble.
Let not thy eyes then shun me, nor thy heart
Detest me utterly: oh, look upon me,
Look back and see my sad, sincere submission!
How my heart swells, as even 'twould burst my bosom,
Fond of its goal, and labouring to be at thee!
What shall I do—what say to make thee hear me?
Pier. Hast thou not wronged me? dar'st thou call thyself
Jaffier, that once loved, valued friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wronged me? Whence these chains?
Whence the vile death which I may meet this moment?
Whence this dishonour, but from thee, thou false one?
Jaff. All's true, yet grant one thing, and I've done [asking.
Pier. What's that?
Jaff. To take thy life on such conditions
The Council have proposed: thou and thy friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.
Pier. Life! ask my life? confess! record myself
A villain, for the privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this cursèd city
A discontented and repining spirit,
Burthensome to itself, a few years longer,
To lose it, may be, at last in a lewd quarrel [art!
For some new friend, treacherous and false as thou
No, this vile world and I have long been jangling,
And cannot part on better terms than now,
When only men like thee are fit to live in't.

Jaff. By all that's just—
Pier. Swear by some other powers,
For thou hast broke that sacred oath too lately.
Jaff. Then, by that hell I merit, I'll not leave thee,
Till to thyself, at least, thou'rt reconciled,
However thy resentments deal with me.
Pier. Not leave me!
Jaff. No; thou shalt not force me from thee.
Use me reproachfully, and like a slave;
Tread on me, buffet me, heap wrongs on wrongs
On my poor head; I'll bear it all with patience,
Shall weary out thy most unfriendly cruelty:
Lie at thy feet and kiss them, though they spurn me,
Till, wounded by my sufferings, thou relent,
And raise me to thy arms with dear forgiveness.
Pier. Art thou not—
Jaff. What?
Pier. A traitor?
Jaff. Yes.
Pier. A villain?
Jaff. Granted.
Pier. A coward, a most scandalous coward,
Spiritless, void of honour, one who has sold
Thy everlasting fame for shameless life?
Jaff. All, all, and more, much more: my faults are numberless.
Pier. And wouldst thou have me live on terms like thine?
Base as thou'rt false—
Jaff. No; 'tis to me that's granted.
The safety of thy life was all I aimed at,
In recompense for faith and trust so broken.
Pier. I scorn it more, because preserved by thee:
And as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy misfortunes, sought thee in thy miseries,
Relieved thy wants, and raised thee from thy state
Of wretchedness in which thy fate had plunged thee,
To rank thee in my list of noble friends,

All I received in surety for thy truth
Were unregarded oaths, and this, this dagger,
Given with a worthless pledge thou since hast stolen,
So I restore it back to thee again;
Swearing by all those powers which thou hast violated,
Never from this cursed hour to hold communion,
Friendship, or interest with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the world.
Take it—farewell!—for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaff. Say thou wilt live then.

Pier. For my life, dispose it
Just as thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tired with.

Jaff. O Pierre!

Pier. No more.

Jaff. My eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine, and ache with gazing.

Pier. Leave me—Nay, then thus, thus I throw thee from me,
And curses, great as is thy falsehood, catch thee!

[*Exeunt* PIERRE *and* Conspirators, *guarded.*

Jaff. Amen! he's gone, my father, friend, preserver;
And here's the portion he has left me.

[*Holds the dagger up.*

This dagger, well remembered; with this dagger
I gave a solemn vow of dire importance;
Parted with this and Belvidera together;—
Have a care, memory; drive that thought no farther;—
No, I'll esteem it as a friend's last legacy,
Treasure it up within this wretched bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That, when they meet, they start not from each other.
So; now for thinking: a blow, called traitor, villain,
Coward, dishonourable coward, faugh!
O for a long sound sleep, and so forget it!
Down, busy devil—

Re-enter BELVIDERA.

Belv. Whither shall I fly?
Where hide me and my miseries together?
Where's now the Roman constancy I boasted?
Sunk into trembling fears and desperation!
Not daring to look up to that dear face
Which used to smile even on my faults, but down
Bending these miserable eyes to earth,
Must move in penance, and implore much mercy.

Jaff. Mercy! kind Heaven has surely endless stores,
Hoarded for thee, of blessings yet untasted.
Let wretches loaded hard with guilt as I am
Bow with the weight, and groan beneath the burthen;
Creep, with a remnant of that strength they've left,
Before the footstool of that Heaven they've injured.
O Belvidera! I'm the wretchedest creature
E'er crawled on earth: now, if thou'st virtue, help
Take me [me;
Into thy arms, and speak the words of peace
To my divided soul, that wars within me
And raises every sense to my confusion;
By Heaven, I'm tottering on the very brink
Of peace, and thou art all the hold I've left.

Belv. Alas! I know thy sorrows are most mighty;
I know thou'st cause to mourn, to mourn, my Jaffier,
With endless cries, and never-ceasing wailings;
Thou'st lost—

Jaff. Oh, I have lost what can't be counted!
My friend too, Belvidera,—that dear friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoiced in,—
Has used me like a slave, shamefully used me;
'Twould break thy pitying heart to hear the story!
What shall I do? resentment, indignation,
Love, pity, fear, and memory how I've wronged him,
Distract my quiet with the very thought on't,
And tear my heart to pieces in my bosom.

Belv. What has he done?

Jaff. Thou'dst hate me, should I tell thee.
Belv. Why?
Jaff. Oh, he has used me—yet, by Heaven, I bear it!
He has used me, Belvidera—but first swear
That when I've told thee thou'lt not loathe me utterly,
Though vilest blots and stains appear upon me;
But still at least, with charitable goodness,
Be near me in the pangs of my affliction—
Not scorn me, Belvidera, as he has done.
Belv. Have I then e'er been false, that now I'm doubted?
Speak, what's the cause I'm grown into distrust?
Why thought unfit to hear my love's complainings?
Jaff. Oh!
Belv. Tell me.
Jaff. Bear my failings, for they're many.
O my dear angel! in that friend I've lost
All my soul's peace; for every thought of him
Strikes my sense hard, and deads it in my brains.
Wouldst thou believe it?—
Belv. Speak.
Jaff. Before we parted,
Ere yet his guards had led him to his prison,
Full of severest sorrows for his sufferings,
With eyes o'erflowing, and a bleeding heart,
Humbling myself almost beneath my nature,
As at his feet I kneeled, and sued for mercy,
Forgetting all our friendship, all the dearness
In which we've lived so many years together,
With a reproachful hand he dashed a blow:
He struck me, Belvidera—by Heaven, he struck me,
Buffeted, called me traitor, villain, coward.
Am I a coward? am I a villain? tell me:
Thou'rt the best judge, and madest me, if I am so.
Damnation! coward!
Belv. Oh! forgive him, Jaffier;

And, if his sufferings wound thy heart already,
What will they do to-morrow?
Jaff. Ha!
Belv. To-morrow;
When thou shalt see him stretched in all the agonies
Of a tormenting and a shameful death;
His bleeding bowels, and his broken limbs,
Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain;—
What will thy heart do then? Oh, sure, 'twill stream
Like my eyes now.
Jaff. What means thy dreadful story?
Death, and to-morrow! broken limbs and bowels!
Insulted o'er by a vile butchering villain!
By all my fears, I shall start out to madness,
With barely guessing, if the truth's hid longer.
Belv. The faithless senators, 'tis they've decreed it:
They say, according to our friends' request,
They shall have death, and not ignoble bondage;
Declare their promised mercy all as forfeited;
False to their oaths, and deaf to intercession,
Warrants are passed for public death to-morrow.
Jaff. Death! doomed to die! condemned unheard! unpleaded!
Belv. Nay, cruellest racks and torments are pre-[paring,
To force confessions from their dying pangs.
Oh, do not look so terribly upon me:
How your lips shake, and all your face disordered!
What means my love?
Jaff. Leave me, I charge thee, leave me! strong temptations
Wake in my heart.
Belv. For what?
Jaff. No more; but leave me.
Belv. Why?
Jaff. Oh! by Heaven, I love thee with that fond-[ness,
I would not have thee stay a moment longer
Near these cursed hands; are they not cold upon thee?

Belv. No, everlasting comfort's in thy arms.
[*Pulls the dagger half out of his bosom, and puts it back again.*
To lean thus on thy breast is softer ease
Than downy pillows decked with leaves of roses.
Jaff. Alas! thou think'st not of the thorns 'tis filled with;
Fly ere they gall thee: there's a lurking serpent
Ready to leap and sting thee to thy heart:
Art thou not terrified?
Belv. No.
Jaff. Call to mind
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought me.
Belv. Ha!
Jaff. Where's my friend? my friend, thou smiling mischief? fled
Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late; thou shouldst have
When thy guilt first had cause; for dire revenge
Is up, and raging for my friend. He groans!
Hark how he groans! his screams are in my ears
Already! see, they've fixed him on the wheel,
And now they tear him—Murder! perjured Senate!
Murder—Oh!—hark thee, traitress, thou'st done this;
Thanks to thy tears and false-persuading love,
[*Fumbling for his dagger.*
How her eyes speak! O thou bewitching creature!
Madness can't hurt thee: come, thou little trembler,
Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe;
'Tis thy own citadel—ha!—yet stand off:
Heaven must have justice, and my broken vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching mercy;
I'll wink, and then 'tis done—
Belv. What means the lord
Of me, my life and love? what's in thy bosom,
Thou grasp'st at so? Nay, why am I thus treated?
[*He draws the dagger, and offers to stab her.*
What wilt thou do? Ah, do not kill me, Jaffier!

Pity these panting breasts, and trembling limbs,
That used to clasp thee when thy looks were milder,[1]
That yet hang heavy on my unpurged soul,
And plunge it not into eternal darkness.

Jaff. No, Belvidera; when we parted last,
I gave this dagger with thee as in trust
To be thy portion, if I e'er proved false.
On such condition was my truth believed;
But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for.
[*Offers to stab her again.*

Belv. Oh, mercy! [*Kneeling.*

Jaff. Nay, no struggling.

Belv. Now then kill me;
[*Leaps upon his neck, and kisses him.*
While thus I cling about thy cruel neck,
Kiss thy revengeful lips, and die in joys
Greater than any I can guess hereafter.

Jaff. I am, I am a coward; witness it, Heaven;
Witness it, earth; and every being, witness!
'Tis but one blow; yet, by immortal love,
I cannot longer bear a thought to harm thee.
[*Throws away the dagger, and embraces her.*
The seal of Providence is sure upon thee,
And thou wert born for yet unheard-of wonders:
Oh, thou wert either born to save or damn me!
By all the power that's given thee o'er my soul,
By thy resistless tears and conquering smiles,
By the victorious love that still waits on thee,
Fly to thy cruel father, save my friend,
Or all our future quiet's lost for ever:
Fall at his feet, cling round his reverend knees;
Speak to him with thy eyes, and with thy tears
Melt his hard heart, and wake dead nature in him;
Crush him in thy arms, and torture him with thy soft-
Nor, till thy prayers are granted, set him free, [ness;
But conquer him, as thou hast vanquished me. [*Exeunt.*

[1] Perhaps a line is lost here.

ACT THE FIFTH.

SCENE I.—*Before* PRIULI'S *house.*

Enter PRIULI.

PRIU. Why, cruel Heaven, have my unhappy days
Been lengthened to this sad one? Oh! dishonour
And deathless infamy is fallen upon me.
Was it my fault? Am I a traitor?
But then, my only child, my daughter wedded; [No.
There my best blood runs foul, and a disease
Incurable has seized upon my memory,
To make it rot and stink to after ages.
Cursed be the fatal minute when I got her!
Or would that I'd been anything but man,
And raised an issue which would ne'er have wronged me!
The miserablest creatures (man excepted)
Are not the less esteemed, though their posterity
Degenerate from the virtues of their fathers;
The vilest beasts are happy in their offsprings;
While only man gets traitors, whores, and villains.
Cursed be the names, and some swift blow from fate
Lay his head deep, where mine may be forgotten!

Enter BELVIDERA *in a long mourning veil.*

Belv. [*Aside.*] He's there, my father, my inhuman father,
That, for three years, has left an only child
Exposed to all the outrages of fate
And cruel ruin—Oh!
Priu. What child of sorrow
Art thou, that comest thus wrapped in weeds of sadness,
And movest as if thy steps were towards a grave?
Belv. A wretch, who from the very top of happiness,
Am fallen into the lowest depths of misery,
And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.
Priu. Indeed, thou talk'st as thou hadst tasted sorrows;
Would I could help thee.
Belv. 'Tis greatly in your power;
The world, too, speaks you charitable; and I,
Who ne'er asked alms before, in that dear hope
Am come a-begging to you, sir.
Priu. For what?
Belv. Oh, well regard me; is this voice a strange one?
Consider, too, when beggars once pretend
A case like mine, no little will content them.
Priu. What wouldst thou beg for?
Belv. Pity and forgiveness. [*Throws up her veil.*
By the kind tender names of child and father,
Hear my complaints, and take me to your love.
Priu. My daughter!
Belv. Yes, your daughter, by a mother
Virtuous and noble, faithful to your honour,
Obedient to your will, kind to your wishes,
Dear to your arms: by all the joys she gave you,
When in her blooming years she was your treasure,
Look kindly on me; in my face behold

The lineaments of hers you've kissed so often,
Pleading the cause of your poor cast-off child.
Priu. Thou art my daughter.
Belv. Yes;—and you've oft told me
With smiles of love, and chaste paternal kisses,
I'd much resemblance of my mother.
Priu. Oh!
Hadst thou inherited her matchless virtues,
I'd been too blest.
Belv. Nay, do not call to memory
My disobedience, but let pity enter
Into your heart, and quite deface the impression;
For could you think how mine's perplexed, what sadness,
Fears, and despairs distract the peace within me,
Oh! you would take me in your dear, dear arms,
Hover with strong compassion o'er your young one,
To shelter me with a protecting wing,
From the black gathered storm, that's just, just
Priu. Don't talk thus. [breaking.
Belv. Yes, I must, and you must hear too.
I have a husband—
Priu. Damn him!
Belv. Oh! do not curse him;
He would not speak so hard a word towards you
On any terms, howe'er he deal with me.
Priu. Ha! what means my child?
Bel. Oh, there's but this short moment
'Twixt me and fate: yet send me not with curses
Down to my grave; afford me one kind blessing
Before we part; just take me in your arms,
And recommend me with a prayer to Heaven,
That I may die in peace; and when I'm dead—
Priu. How my soul's catched!
Belv. Lay me, I beg you, lay me
By the dear ashes of my tender mother:
She would have pitied me, had fate yet spared her.

Priu. By Heaven, my aching heart forebodes much mischief.
Tell me thy story, for I'm still thy father.
Belv. No, I'm contented,
Priu. Speak.
Belv. No matter.
Priu. Tell me.
By yon blest Heaven, my heart runs o'er with fond-
Belv. Oh! [ness!
Priu. Utter it.
Belv. Oh, my husband, my dear husband
Carries a dagger in his once kind bosom,
To pierce the heart of your poor Belvidera.
Priu. Kill thee?
Belv. Yes, kill me. When he passed his faith
And covenant against your state and Senate,
He gave me up as hostage for his truth;
With me a dagger, and a dire commission,
Whene'er he failed, to plunge it through this bosom.
I learnt the danger, chose the hour of love
To attempt his heart, and bring it back to honour.
Great Love prevailed, and blessed me with success;
He came, confessed, betrayed his dearest friends
For promised mercy. Now they're doomed to suffer,
Galled with remembrance of what then was sworn,
If they are lost, he vows to appease the gods
With this poor life, and make my blood the atonement.
Priu. Heavens! [parting;
Belv. Think you saw what passed at our last
Think you beheld him like a raging lion,
Pacing the earth, and tearing up his steps,
Fate in his eyes, and roaring with the pain
Of burning fury; think you saw his one hand
Fixed on my throat, whilst the extended other
Grasped a keen threatening dagger; oh! 'twas thus
We last embraced; when, trembling with revenge,

He dragged me to the ground, and at my bosom
Presented horrid death; cried out "My friends!
Where are my friends?" swore, wept, raged, threatened, loved;
For he yet loved, and that dear love preserved me
To this last trial of a father's pity.
I fear not death, but cannot bear a thought
That that dear hand should do the unfriendly office.
If I was ever then your care, now hear me;
Fly to the Senate, save the promised lives
Of his dear friends, ere mine be made the sacrifice.

Priu. Oh, my heart's comfort!

Belv. Will you not, my father?
Weep not, but answer me.

Priu. By Heaven, I will.
Not one of them but what shall be immortal.
Canst thou forgive me all my follies past?
I'll henceforth be indeed a father; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the vital warmth that feeds my life;
Dear as these eyes that weep in fondness o'er thee.
Peace to thy heart! Farewell.

Belv. Go, and remember
'Tis Belvidera's life her father pleads for.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Hum, hum, hah; Signior Priuli, my lord Pruili, my lord, my lord, my lord! How we lords love to call one another by our titles! My lord, my lord, my lord—Pox on him! I am a lord as well as he; and so let him fiddle. I'll warrant him he's gone to the Senate-house, and I'll be there too, soon enough for somebody. Odd! here's a tickling speech about the plot; I'll prove there's a plot with a vengeance—would I had it without book; let me see:—"Most reverend senators,—That there is a plot, surely by this time, no man that hath eyes or under-

standing in his head will presume to doubt; 'tis as plain as the light in the cucumber"—no—hold there—cucumber does not come in yet—"'tis as plain as the light in the sun, or as the man in the moon, even at noon-day: it is indeed a pumpkin-plot, which, just as it was mellow, we have gathered, and now we have gathered it, prepared and dressed it, shall we throw it like a pickled cucumber out at the window? no: that it is not only a bloody, horrid, execrable, damnable and audacious plot; but it is, as I may so say, a saucy plot; and we all know, most reverend fathers, that what is sauce for a goose is sauce for a gander: therefore, I say, as those blood-thirsty ganders of the conspiracy would have destroyed us geese of the Senate, let us make haste to destroy them; so I humbly move for hanging." Ha, hurry durry! I think this will do; though I was something out, at first, about the sun and the cucumber.

Enter AQUILINA.

Aquil. Good-morrow, senator.

Ant. Nacky, my dear Nacky! 'morrow, Nacky! Odd! I am very brisk, very merry, very pert, very jovial—ha-a-a-a-a—kiss me, Nacky; how dost thou do, my little tory rory strumpet? Kiss me, I say, hussy, kiss me.

Aquil. Kiss me, Nacky! hang you, sir coxcomb, hang you, sir!

Ant. Hayty tayty, is it so indeed? with all my heart, faith! "Hey then up go we,"[1] faith—"hey then up go we," dum dum derum dump. [*Sings.*

[1] This was the burden of many songs of that period, as in the following:

"We'll drive the doctors out of doors,
And parts whate'er they be,
We'll cry all parts and learning down,
And *heigh then up go we.*"

Collec. of Songs, 1731.—*Thornton.*

Aquil. Signior.

Ant. Madonna.

Aquil. Do you intend to die in your bed?

Ant. About threescore years hence much may be done, my dear.

Aquil. You'll be hanged, signior.

Ant. Hanged, sweetheart! pr'ythee be quiet: hanged quoth-a! that's a merry conceit, with all my heart; why, thou jokest, Nacky; thou art given to joking, I'll swear; well, I protest, Nacky, nay, I must protest, and will protest, that I love joking dearly, mun. And I love thee for joking, and I'll kiss thee for joking, and towze thee for joking; and odd, I have a devilish mind to take thee aside about that business for joking too; odd I have, and, "Hey then up go we," dum dum derum dump. [*Sings.*

Aquil. See you this, sir? [*Draws a dagger.*

Ant. O laud, a dagger! O laud! it is naturally my aversion, I cannot endure the sight on't; hide it, for Heaven's sake, I cannot look that way till it be gone—hide it, hide it, oh, oh, hide it!

Aquil. Yes, in your heart I'll hide it.

Ant. My heart! what, hide a dagger in my heart's blood?

Aquil. Yes, in thy heart, thy throat, thou pampered devil;

Thou'st helped to spoil my peace, and I'll have vengeance
On thy cursed life, for all the bloody Senate,
The perjured faithless Senate. Where's my lord,
My happiness, my love, my god, my hero,
Doomed by thy accursed tongue, amongst the rest,
To a shameful rack? By all the rage that's in me,
I'll be whole years in murdering thee.

Ant. Why, Nacky, wherefore so passionate? what have I done? what's the matter, my dear Nacky? Am not I thy love, thy happiness, thy

lord, thy hero, thy senator, and every thing in the world, Nacky?

Aquil. Thou! think'st thou, thou art fit to met my
To bear the eager clasps of my embraces? [joys;
Give me my Pierre, or—

Ant. Why, he's to be hanged, little Nacky; trussed up for treason, and so forth, child.

Aquil. Thou liest; stop down thy throat that hellish sentence,
Or 'tis thy last: swear that my love shall live,
Or thou art dead.

Ant. Ah!

Aquil. Swear to recall his doom;
Swear at my feet, and tremble at my fury.

Ant. I do. Now if she would but kick a little bit, one kick now; ah!

Aquil. Swear, or—

Ant. I do, by these dear fragrant foots, and little toes, sweet as—e-e-e-e my Nacky, Nacky, Nacky.

Aquil. How!

Ant. Nothing but untie thy shoe-string a little, faith and troth, that's all, that's all, as I hope to live, Nacky, that's all.

Aquil. Nay, then—

Ant. Hold, hold; thy love, thy lord, thy hero
Shall be preserved and safe.

Aquil. Or may this poniard
Rust in thy heart!

Ant. With all my soul.

Aquil. Farewell! [*Exit.*

Ant. Adieu! Why, what a bloody-minded, inveterate, termagant strumpet have I been plagued with! Oh, yet more! nay then, I die, I die—I am dead already. [*Stretches himself out. Scene closes.*

SCENE II.—*A Street near* PRIULI'S *House.*

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. Final destruction seize on all the world!
Bend down, ye Heavens, and, shutting round this earth,
Crush the vile globe into its first confusion;
Scorch it with elemental flames to one curst cinder,
And all us little creepers in't, called men,
Burn, burn, to nothing! but let Venice burn
Hotter than all the rest; here kindle hell
Ne'er to extinguish; and let souls hereafter
Groan here, in all those pains which mine feels now!

Enter BELVIDERA.

Belv. My life! [*Meeting him.*
Jaff. My plague! [*Turning from her.*
Belv. Nay, then I see my ruin,
If I must die!
Jaff. No, Death's this day too busy;
Thy father's ill-timed mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy labours though, and him too:
But all my poor, betrayed, unhappy friends
Have summons to prepare for fate's black hour;
And yet I live.
Belv. Then be the next my doom.
I see thou hast passed my sentence in thy heart,
And I'll no longer weep or plead against it;
But with the humblest, most obedient patience
Meet thy dear hands, and kiss them when they wound
Indeed I'm willing, but I beg thee do it [me.
With some remorse; and, when thou givest the blow,
View me with eyes of a relenting love,
And show me pity, for 'twill sweeten justice.
Jaff. Show pity to thee?
Belv. Yes; and when thy hands,
Charged with my fate, come trembling to the deed,

As thou hast done a thousand thousand dear times
To this poor breast, when kinder rage has brought thee,
When our stinged hearts have leaped to meet each other,
And melting kisses sealed our lips together,
When joys have left me gasping in thy arms,
So let my death come now, and I'll not shrink from it.
Jaff. Nay, Belvidera, do not fear my cruelty,
Nor let the thoughts of death perplex thy fancy;
But answer me to what I shall demand,
With a firm temper and unshaken spirit.
Belv. I will when I've done weeping—
Jaff. Fie, no more on't.
How long is't since the miserable day
We wedded first?
Belv. Oh!
Jaff. Nay, keep in thy tears,
Lest they unman me too.
Belv. Heaven knows I cannot;
The words you utter sound so very sadly,
These streams will follow—
Jaff. Come, I'll kiss them dry then.
Belv. But was't a miserable day?
Jaff. A cursed one.
Belv. I thought it otherwise; and you've oft sworn
In the transporting hours of warmest love,
When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn you blessed it.
Jaff. 'Twas a rash oath.
Belv. Then why am I not cursed too?
Jaff. No, Belvidera; by the eternal truth,
I dote with too much fondness.
Belv. Still so kind!
Still then do you love me?
Jaff. Nature, in her workings,
Inclines not with more ardour to creation,

Than I do now towards thee; man ne'er was blest,
Since the first pair first met, as I have been.
Belv. Then sure you will not curse me?
Jaff. No, I'll bless thee.
I came on purpose, Belvidera, to bless thee.
'Tis now, I think, three years we've lived together.
Belv. And may no fatal minute ever part us,
Till reverend grown, for age and love, we go
Down to one grave, as our last bed, together;
There sleep in peace till an eternal morning!
Jaff. When will that be? [*Sighing.*
Belv. I hope long ages hence.
Jaff. Have I not hitherto—I beg thee tell me
Thy very fears—used thee with tenderest love?
Did e'er my soul rise up in wrath against thee?
Did I e'er frown when Belvidera smiled,
Or, by the least unfriendly word, betray
Abating passion? have I ever wronged thee?
Belv. No.
Jaff. Has my heart, or have my eyes e'er wandered
To any other woman?
Belv. Never, never.
I were the worst of false ones, should I accuse thee.
I own I've been too happy, blest above
My sex's charter.
Jaff. Did I not say I came
To bless thee?
Belv. Yes.
Jaff. Then hear me, bounteous Heaven!
Pour down your blessings on this beauteous head,
Where everlasting sweets are always springing:
With a continual-giving hand, let peace,
Honour, and safety always hover round her;
Feed her with plenty; let her eyes ne'er see
A sight of sorrow, nor her heart know mourning:
Crown all her days with joy, her nights with rest
Harmless as her own thoughts, and prop her virtue

To bear the loss of one that too much loved;
And comfort her with patience in our parting!
Belv. How, parting, parting!
Jaff. Yes, for ever parting;
I have sworn, Belvidera, by yon Heaven,
That best can tell how much I lose to leave thee,
We part this hour for ever.
Belv. Oh, call back
Your cruel blessing; stay with me and curse me!
Jaff. No; 'tis resolved.
Belv. Then hear me too, just Heaven!
Pour down your curses on this wretched head,
With never-ceasing vengeance; let despair,
Danger or infamy, nay, all surround me.
Starve me with wantings; let my eyes ne'er see
A sight of comfort, nor my heart know peace;
But dash my days with sorrow, nights with horrors
Wild as my own thoughts now, and let loose fury
To make me mad enough for what I lose,
If I must lose him—if I must! I will not.—
Oh, turn and hear me!
Jaff. Now hold, heart, or never.
Belv. By all the tender days we have lived together,
By all our charming nights, and joys that crowned them,
Pity my sad condition; speak, but speak!
Jaff. Oh!
Belv. By these arms that now cling round thy neck,
By this dear kiss, and by ten thousand more,
By these poor streaming eyes—
Jaff. Murder! unhold me!
By the immortal destiny that doomed me
[*Draws his dagger.*
To this cursed minute, I'll not live one longer.
Resolve to let me go, or see me fall—
Belv. Hold, sir, be patient.
Jaff. Hark, the dismal bell [*Passing-bell tolls.*

Tolls out for death! I must attend its call too;
For my poor friend, my dying Pierre expects me;
He sent a message to require I'd see him
Before he died, and take his last forgiveness.
Farewell for ever!

Belv. Leave thy dagger with me.
Bequeath me something.—Not one kiss at parting?

[JAFFIER, *going out, looks back at her.*

O my poor heart, when wilt thou break?

Jaff. Yet stay,
We have a child, as yet a tender infant:
Be a kind mother to him when I'm gone,
Breed him in virtue and the paths of honour,
But let him never know his father's story;
I charge thee guard him from the wrongs my fate
May do his future fortune, or his name.
Now—nearer yet! [*Approaching each other.*] Oh
that my arms were rivetted
Thus round thee ever! But my friends, my oath—
This, and no more. [*Kisses her.*

Belv. Another, sure another,
For that poor little one you've ta'en care of;
I'll give't him truly.

Jaff. So, now farewell.

Belv. For ever?

Jaff. Heaven knows for ever; all good angels
guard thee! [*Exit.*

Belv. All ill ones sure had charge of me this
moment.
Cursed be my days, and doubly cursed my nights,
Which I must now mourn out in widowed tears;
Blasted be every herb, and fruit, and tree;
Cursed be the rain that falls upon the earth,
And may the general curse reach man and beast!
Oh, give me daggers, fire, or water;
How I could bleed, how burn, how drown, the waves
Huzzing and booming round my sinking head,

Till I descended to the peaceful bottom!
Oh, there's all quiet, here all rage and fury;
The air's too thin, and pierces my weak brain;
I long for thick substantial sleep. Hell! hell!
Burst from the centre, rage and roar aloud,
If thou art half so hot, so mad as I am!

Enter PRIULI *and* Servants.

Who's there?

Priu. Run, seize and bring her safely home;
Guard her as you would life. Alas, poor creature!
[*They seize her.*

Belv. What! to my husband? then conduct me quickly.
Are all things ready? shall we die most gloriously?
Say not a word of this to my old father.
Murmuring streams, soft shades, and springing flowers,
Lutes, laurels, seas of milk, and ships of amber.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Public Place. A scaffold and wheel in centre.*

Enter Officers, PIERRE, *and* Guards, *a* Friar, Executioner, *and a great* Rabble.

Offi. Room, room there—stand all by, make room for the prisoner.

Pier. My friend not come yet?

Friar. Why are you so obstinate?

Pier. Why you so troublesome, that a poor wretch Can't die in peace,
But you like ravens will be croaking round him?

Friar. Yet Heaven—

Pier. I tell thee Heaven and I are friends:
I ne'er broke peace with it yet, by cruel murders,
Rapine or perjury, or vile deceiving;
But lived in moral justice towards all men;
Nor am a foe to the most strong believers,
Howe'er my own short-sighted faith confine me.
Friar. But an all-seeing Judge—
Pier. You say my conscience
Must be my accuser: I have searched that conscience,
And find no records there of crimes that scare me.
Friar. 'Tis strange you should want faith.
Pier. You want to lead
My reason blindfold, like a hampered lion,
Checked of its nobler vigour; then, when baited
Down to obedient tameness, make it couch,
And show strange tricks, which you call signs of faith:
So silly souls are gulled, and you get money.
Away, no more! Captain, I'd have hereafter
This fellow write no lies of my conversion,
Because he has crept upon my troubled hours.

Enter JAFFIER.

Jaff. Hold: eyes, be dry; heart, strengthen me to bear
This hideous sight, and humble me to take
The last forgiveness of a dying friend,
Betrayed by my vile falsehood to his ruin!
O Pierre!
Pier. Yet nearer.
Jaff. Crawling on my knees,
And prostrate on the earth, let me approach thee:
How shall I look up to thy injured face,
That always used to smile with friendship on me?
It darts an air of so much manly virtue,
That I, methinks, look little in thy sight,
And stripes are fitter for me than embraces.
Pier. Dear to my arms, though thou'st undone my fame,
I can't forget to love thee: pr'ythee, Jaffier,

Forgive that filthy blow my passion dealt thee;
I'm now preparing for the land of peace,
And fain would have the charitable wishes
Of all good men, like thee, to bless my journey.
Jaff. Good! I'm the vilest creature, worse than e'er
Suffered the shameful fate thou'rt going to taste of.
Why was I sent for to be used thus kindly?
Call, call me villain, as I am; describe
The foul complexion of my hateful deeds;
Lead me to the rack, and stretch me in thy stead,
I've crimes enough to give it its full load,
And do it credit: thou wilt but spoil the use on't,
And honest men hereafter bear its figure
About them, as a charm from treacherous friendship.
Offi. The time grows short; your friends are dead
Jaff. Dead! [already.
Pier. Yes, dead, Jaffier; they've all died like men
Worthy their character. [too,
Jaff. And what must I do?
Pier. Oh, Jaffier!
Jaff. Speak aloud thy burthened soul,
And tell thy troubles to thy tortured friend!
Pier. Friend! Couldst thou yet be a friend, a generous friend,
I might hope comfort from thy noble sorrows.
Heaven knows I want a friend!
Jaff. And I a kind one,
That would not thus scorn my repenting virtue,
Or think, when he's to die, my thoughts are idle.
Pier. No! live, I charge thee, Jaffier.
Jaff. Yes, I will live,
But it shall be to see thy fall revenged
At such a rate as Venice long shall groan for.
Pier. Wilt thou?
Jaff. I will, by Heaven!
Pier. Then still thou'rt noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh—yet—shall I trust thee?

Jaff. No; I've been false already.
Pier. Dos ıthou love me?
Jaff. Rip up my heart, and satisfy thy doubtings.
Pier. Curse on this weakness! [*He weeps.*
Jaff. Tears! amazement! tears!
I never saw thee melted thus before;
And know there's something labouring in thy bosom
That must have vent: though I'm a villain, tell me.
Pier. Seest thou that engine?
[*Pointing to the wheel.*
Jaff. Why?
Pier. Is't fit a soldier, who has lived with honour,
Fought nations' quarrels, and been crowned with conquest,
Be exposed a common carcass on a wheel?
Jaff. Ha!
Pier. Speak! is't fitting?
Jaff. Fitting?
Pier. Yes, is't fitting?
Jaff. What's to be done?
Pier. I'd have thee undertake
Something that's noble, to preserve my memory
From the disgrace that's ready to attaint it.
Offi. The day grows late, sir.
Pier. I'll make haste. Oh, Jaffier,
Though thou'st betrayed me, do me some way justice.
Jaff. No more of that: thy wishes shall be satisfied;
I have a wife, and she shall bleed; n child too
Yield up his little throat, and all to aı ease thee—
[*Going away,* PIE: .E *holds him.*
Pier. No—this—no more! [*He whis rs* JAFFIER.
Jaff. Ha! is't then so?
Pier. Most certainly.
Jaff. I'll do it.
Pier. Remember.
Offi. Sir.

Pier. Come, now I'm ready.

[*He and* JAFFIER *ascend the scaffold.*

Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate, and die with decency.
Come! [*Takes off his gown.* Executioner *prepares*
Friar. Son! *to bind him.*
Pier. Hence, tempter!
Offi. Stand off, priest!
Pier. I thank you, sir.
You'll think on't. [*To* JAFFIER.
Jaff. 'Twon't grow stale before to-morrow.
Pier. Now, Jaffier! now I'm going. Now;—
Jaff. Have at thee,

[Executioner *having bound him.*

Thou honest heart, then—here! [*Stabs him.*] And
this is well too. [*Stabs himself.*
Friar. Damnable deed!
Pier. Now thou'st indeed been faithful.
This was done nobly. We have deceived the Senate.
Jaff. Bravely.
Pier. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, oh! [*Dies.*
Jaff. Now, ye cursed rulers,
Thus of the blood you've shed I make libation,
And sprinkle it mingling: may it rest upon you,
And all your race! Be henceforth peace a stranger
Within your walls! Let plagues and famine waste
Your generations!—O poor Belvidera!
Sir, I've a wife; bear this in safety to her,—
A token that with my dying breath I blessed her,
And the dear little infant left behind me.
I'm sick—I'm quiet— [*Dies.*
Offi. Bear this news to the Senate,
And guard their bodies till there's farther order:
Heaven grant I die so well! [*The Scene closes.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room in* PRIULI'S *House.*

Soft Music. Enter BELVIDERA *distracted, led by two of her* Women, PRIULI, *and* Servants.

Priu. Strengthen her heart with patience, pitying Heaven!

Belv. Come, come, come, come—nay, come to bed,
Pr'ythee, my love. The winds! hark how they whistle!
And the rain beats: oh, how the weather shrinks me!
You're angry now; who cares? pish, no, indeed!
Choose then; I say you shall not go, you shall not.
Whip your ill-nature; get you gone then—oh!
[JAFFIER'S Ghost *rises.*
Are you returned? See, father, here he's come again:
Am I to blame to love him? O, thou dear one!
[Ghost *sinks.*
Why do you fly me? are you angry still then?
Jaffier! where art thou? Father, why do you do thus?
Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here somewhere.
Stand off, I say! what, gone? remember it, tyrant!
I may revenge myself for this trick one day.
I'll do't—I'll do't. Renault's a nasty fellow:
Hang him, hang him, hang him!

Enter Officer *and others.*

Priu. News—what news? [Officer *whispers* PRIULI.

Offi. Most sad, sir.
Jaffier, upon the scaffold, to prevent
A shameful death, stabbed Pierre, and next himself:
Both fell together.

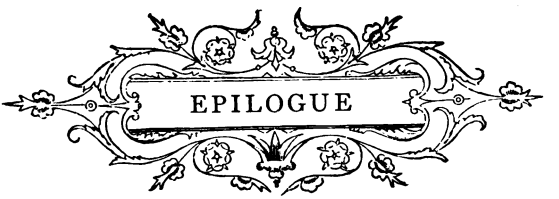
Priu. Daughter!

[*The* Ghosts *of* JAFFIER *and* PIERRE *rise together, both bloody.*

Belv. Ha, look there!
My husband bloody, and his friend too! Murder!
Who has done this? speak to me, thou sad vision;
[Ghosts *sink.*
On these poor trembling knees I beg it. Vanished!—
Here they went down. Oh, I'll dig, dig the den up.
You shan't delude me thus. Ho, Jaffier, Jaffier,
Peep up and give me but a look. I have him!
I've got him, father: oh, now how I'll smuggle him!
My love! my dear! my blessing! help me! help me!
They've hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.
Nay—now they pull so hard—farewell! [*Dies.*

Maid. She's dead—
Breathless and dead.

Priu. Then guard me from the sight on't.
Lead me into some place that's fit for mourning,
Where the free air, light, and the cheerful sun
May never enter; hang it round with black;
Set up one taper that may last a day,
As long as I've to live; and there all leave me,—
Sparing no tears when you this tale relate;
But bid all cruel fathers dread my fate. [*Exeunt.*



THE text is done, and now for application,
And when that's ended, pass your approbation.
Though the conspiracy's prevented here,
Methinks I see another hatching there;
And there's a certain faction fain would sway,
If they had strength enough, and damn this play.
But this the author bade me boldly say:—
If any take his plainness in ill part,
He's glad on't from the bottom of his heart;
Poets in honour of the truth should write,
With the same spirit brave men for it fight;
And though against him causeless hatreds rise,
And daily where he goes of late, he spies
The scowls of sullen and revengeful eyes,
'Tis what he knows with much contempt to bear,
And serves a cause too good to let him fear.
He fears no poison from an incensed drab,
No ruffian's five-foot-sword, nor rascal's stab,
Nor any other snares of mischief laid,—
Not a Rose-alley cudgel-ambuscade,[1]
From any private cause where malice reigns,
Or general pique all blockheads have to brains:

[1] This refers to the attack upon Dryden in Rose Street, Covent Garden, in December 1679—made by order of Rochester in consequence, it is supposed, of Dryden being reputed the author of the *Essay on Satire*. The preceding verse probably contains an allusion to the stabbing of Mr. Scroop by Sir Thomas Armstrong, in the pit of the Duke's Theatre, which is mentioned by Langbaine (*Dram. Poets*, p. 460).

Nothing shall daunt his pen when truth does call—
No, not the picture-mangler[1] at Guildhall.
The rebel tribe, of which that vermin's one,
Have now set forward, and their course begun;
And while that prince's figure they deface,
As they before had massacred his name,
Durst their base fears but look him in the face,
They'd use his person as they've used his fame:
A face in which such lineaments they read
Of that great martyr's, whose rich blood they shed,
That their rebellious hate they still retain,
And in his son would murder him again.
With indignation, then, let each brave heart
Rouse and unite to take his injured part;
Till Royal love and goodness call him home,[2]
And songs of triumph meet him as he come;
Till Heaven his honour and our peace restore,
And villains never wrong his virtue more.

[1] The same incident is referred to by other writers. The Duke of York's picture had been cut from the legs downwards.

[2] The Duke was then in a sort of exile in Scotland.

APPENDIX.

The following letters were first published among a collection of *Familiar Letters by Lord Rochester and others*, &c. 8vo, 1697; and were afterwards subjoined to an edition of Otway's Works in 1727, under the title of "Love Letters." They have no superscription, but are supposed to have been written to Mrs. Barry, the actress.

Letter I.

My Tyrant!

I endure too much torment to be silent, and have endured it too long not to make the severest complaint. I love you, I dote on you; desire makes me mad when I am near you, and despair when I am from you. Sure, of all miseries, love is to me the most intolerable: it haunts me in my sleep, perplexes me when waking; every melancholy thought makes my fears more powerful, and every delightful one makes my wishes more unruly. In all other uneasy chances of a man's life, there is an immediate recourse to some kind of succour or another: in wants we apply ourselves to our friends, in sickness to physicians; but love, the sum, the total of all misfortunes, must be endured with silence; no friend so dear to trust with such a secret, nor remedy in art so powerful to remove its anguish. Since the first day I saw you, I have hardly enjoyed one hour of perfect quiet. I loved you early; and no sooner had I beheld that soft bewitching face of yours, but I felt in my heart the very foundation of all my peace give way: but when you became another's I must confess that I did then rebel, had foolish pride enough to promise myself I would in time recover my liberty: in spite of my enslaved nature, I swore, against myself, I would not love you; I affected a resentment,

stifled my spirit, and would not let it bend so much as once to upbraid you, each day it was my chance to see or to be near you: with stubborn sufferance I resolved to bear, and brave your power: nay, did it often too, successfully.

Generally with wine or conversation I diverted or appeased the demon that possessed me; but when at night, returning to my unhappy self, to give my heart an account why I had done it so unnatural a violence, it was then I always paid a treble interest for the short moments of ease which I had borrowed; then every treacherous thought rose up, and took your part, nor left me till they had thrown me on my bed, and opened those sluices of tears that were to run till morning. This has been for some years my best condition: nay, time itself, that decays all things else, has but increased and added to my longings. I tell it you, and charge you to believe it, as you are generous (which sure you must be, for everything, except your neglect of me, persuades me that you are so), even at this time, though other arms have held you, and so long trespassed on those dear joys that only were my due, I love you with that tenderness of spirit, that purity of truth, and that sincerity of heart, that I could sacrifice the nearest friends or interests I have on earth, barely but to please you: if I had all the world, it should be yours; for with it I could be but miserable, if you were not mine.

I appeal to yourself for justice, if through the whole actions of my life I have done any one thing that might not let you see how absolute your authority was over me. Your commands have been always sacred to me; your smiles have always transported me, and your frowns awed me. In short, you will quickly become to me the greatest blessing, or the greatest curse, that ever man was doomed to. I cannot so much as look on you without confusion; wishes and fears rise up in war within me, and work a cursed distraction through my soul, that must, I am sure, in time, have wretched consequences: you only can, with that healing cordial, love, assuage and calm my torments. Pity the man then that would be proud to die for you, and cannot live without you; and allow him thus far to boast too, that (take out fortune from the balance) you never

were beloved or courted by a creature that had a nobler or juster pretence to your heart than the unfortunate and (even at this time) weeping

OTWAY.

Letter II.

In value of your quiet, though it would be the utter ruin of my own, I have endeavoured this day to persuade myself never more to trouble you with a passion that has tormented me sufficiently already; and is so much the more a torment to me, in that I perceive it is become one to you, who are much dearer to me than myself. I have laid all the reasons my distracted condition would let me have recourse to before me; I have consulted my pride, whether, after a rival's possession, I ought to ruin all my peace for a woman that another has been more blest in, though no man ever loved as I did;—but love, victorious love! o'erthrows all that, and tells me it is his nature never to remember; he still looks forward from the present hour, expecting still new dawns, new rising happiness; never looks back, never regards what is past and left behind him, but buries and forgets it quite in the hot fierce pursuit of joy before him. I have consulted too my very self, and find how careless nature was in framing me; seasoned me hastily with all the most violent inclinations and desires, but omitted the ornaments that should make those qualities become me. I have consulted too my lot of fortune, and find how foolishly I wish possession of what is so precious all the world's too cheap for it; yet still I love, still I dote on, and cheat myself, very content, because the folly pleases me. It is pleasure to think how fair you are, though, at the same time, worse than damnation to think how cruel. Why should you tell me you have shut your heart up for ever? It is an argument unworthy of yourself, sounds like reserve, and not so much sincerity as sure I may claim even from a little of your friendship.

Can your age, your face, your eyes, and your spirit bid defiance to that sweet power? No, you know better to what end Heaven made you; know better how to manage youth and pleasure, than to let them die and pall

upon your hands. 'Tis me, 'tis only me you have barred your heart against. My sufferings, my diligence, my sighs, complaints, and tears, are of no power with your haughty nature: yet sure you might at least vouchsafe to pity them, not shift me off with gross, thick, home-spun friendship, the common coin that passes betwixt worldly interests—must that be my lot? Take it, ill-natured, take it; give it to him who would waste his fortune for you; give it the man would fill your lap with gold, court you with offers of vast rich possessions; give it the fool that has nothing but his money to plead for him: love will have a much nearer relation, or none. I ask for glorious happiness; you bid me welcome to your friendship: it is like seating me at your side-table, when I have the best pretence to your right hand at the feast. I love, I dote, I am mad, and know no measure; nothing but extremes can give me ease, the kindest love, or most provoking scorn.

Yet even your scorn would not perform the cure: it might indeed take off the edge of hope, but damned despair will gnaw my heart for ever. If then I am not odious to your eyes, if you have charity enough to value the well-being of a man that holds you dearer than you can the child your bowels are most fond of, by that sweet pledge of your first softest love, I charm and here conjure you to pity the distracting pangs of mine; pity my unquiet days and restless nights; pity the frenzy that has half possessed my brain already, and makes me write to you thus ravingly: the wretch in Bedlam is more at peace than I am; and if I must never possess the heaven I wish for, my next desire is (and the sooner the better) a clean-swept cell, a merciful keeper, and your compassion when you find me there.

Think and be generous.

Letter III.

Since you are going to quit the world[1] I think myself obliged, as a member of that world, to use the best of my endeavours to divert you from so ill-natured an inclination: therefore, by reason your visits will take up so much of

[1] To leave the stage.

this day, I have debarred myself the opportunity of waiting on you this afternoon, that I may take a time you are more mistress of, and when you shall have more leisure to hear, if it be possible for any arguments of mine to take place in a heart I am afraid too much hardened against me. I must confess it may look a little extraordinary for one under my circumstances to endeavour the confirming your good opinion of the world, when it had been much better for me, one of us had never seen it; for nature disposed me from my creation to love, and my ill-fortune has condemned me to dote on one who certainly could never have been deaf so long to so faithful a passion had nature disposed her from her creation to hate anything but me. I beg you to forgive this trifling, for I have so many thoughts of this nature that 'tis impossible for me to take pen and ink in my hand and keep them quiet, especially when I have the least pretence to let you know you are the cause of the severest disquiets that ever touched the heart of

OTWAY.

LETTER IV.

Could I see you without passion, or be absent from you without pain, I need not beg your pardon for this renewing my vows, that I love you more than health, or any happiness here or hereafter. Everything you do is a new charm to me; and, though I have languished for seven long tedious years of desire, jealously and despairing, yet every minute I see you I still discover something new and more bewitching. Consider how I love you; what would not I renounce or enterprise for you! I must have you mine, or I am miserable, and nothing but knowing which shall be the happy hour can make the rest of my life that are [is] to come tolerable. Give me a word or two of comfort, or resolve never to look with common goodness on me more, for I cannot bear a kind look, and after it a cruel denial. This minute my heart aches for you; and, if I cannot have a right in yours, I wish it would ache till I could complain to you no longer.

Remember poor OTWAY.

LETTER V.

You cannot but be sensible that I am blind, or you would not so openly discover what a ridiculous tool you make of me. I should be glad to discover whose satisfaction I was sacrificed to this morning; for I am sure your own ill-nature could not be guilty of inventing such an injury to me, merely to try how much I could bear, were it not for the sake of some ass that has the fortune to please you. In short, I have made it the business of my life to do you service and please you, if possible by any way to convince you of the unhappy love I have for seven years toiled under; and your whole business is to pick ill-natured conjectures out of my harmless freedom of conversation, to vex and gall me with, as often as you are pleased to divert yourself at the expense of my quiet. O thou tormenter! Could I think it were jealousy, how should I humble myself to be justified! But I cannot bear the thought of being made a property either of another man's good fortune or the vanity of a woman that designs nothing but to plague me.

There may be means found, some time or other, to let you know your mistaking.

LETTER VI.

You were pleased to send me word you would meet me in the Mall this evening, and give me further satisfaction in the matter you were so unkind to charge me with: I was there, but found you not; and therefore beg of you, as you ever would wish yourself to be eased of the highest torment it were possible for your nature to be sensible of, to let me see you some time to-morrow, and send me word, by this bearer, where, and at what hour, you will be so just as either to acquit or condemn me; that I may, hereafter, for your sake, either bless all your bewitching sex, or, as often as I henceforth think of you, curse womankind for ever.

THE END.

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